

THE *Desert*  
MAGAZINE

MARCH, 1980 \$1.50

---

## ARIZONA BYWAYS

Patagonia  
Mission del Bac  
Arcosanti



PLUS:  
DATES!





# 1980 DATSUN KING CAB— THE ROOMIEST SMALL TRUCK IN HISTORY.

## A DATSUN EXCLUSIVE! 2 REAR JUMP SEATS INSIDE THE CAB.

It took Datsun to come up with the biggest small pickup news in 20 years: the new Datsun King Cab® GL. With more space, legroom and luxury than you may experience in any small truck—including two reclining bucket seats up front and two jump seats behind that fold up to create more inside storage space than ever. That's "Grand Luxury" as only the King Cab GL can deliver it. With everything from cut-pile carpeting to a road-smoothing new ride.

## GONNA PICK YOU UP LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

When you add up the standards, no truck's gonna pick you up like the new King Cab GL. Check out this checklist: • Styled wheels • Radial tires • Quad rectangular headlamps • Engine compartment lamp • 5-speed over-drive • Full instrumentation including tachometer • Quartz clock • AM/FM radio • Electric rear-window defroster • Center console • Even a dome lamp that swings down to light the cargo area.



## DATSUN MILEAGE: MONEY IN THE BANK.

There isn't a bigger rig that can match Datsun pickups for economy. Yet Datsun trucks, with their gutsy 2-liter overhead cam engines, can haul 1400 lbs. of cargo and some bigger pickups. Now that's a truck you can drive all the way to the bank.

**25**

EPA  
ESTIMATED  
MPG

**32**

EPA  
ESTIMATED  
HIGHWAY

EPA estimates for comparisons. Actual mileage may differ, depending on speed, trip length and weather. Actual highway mpg will probably be less than est. California mileage lower.

## PERSONAL PICKUPS: THE RIGHT CAB, THE RIGHT BED.

For 1980, Datsun gives you choice like never before. From standard 6-foot beds... to the super-size Datsun long bed with over 7-feet of cargo length.

And cabs ranging from Datsun's lowest priced Standard

Li'l Hustler to the luxurious King Cab GL. We're dedicated to building you the right truck for your trucking needs.

## THE TOUGH KEEP GETTING TOUGHER.

Over 37 percent of all small trucks on the road today are Datsuns. act to follow—but durability is a Datsun tradition built on quality. We test and retest under demanding conditions until every pickup is Datsun-perfect, and ready for a tough life ahead. Datsun trucks: their first job is to last. Test drive the big news in small trucks at your Datsun dealer—the small truck expert.



That's a tough

# DATSUN WE ARE DRIVEN





# THE *Desert* MAGAZINE

Volume 43, Number 2

The voice of the Lord thunders through the lightning.  
It resounds through the deserts.

—Psalms 29:7,8

March, 1980

## Editorial Staff

Donald MacDonald, *Editor*  
Gary E. Squier, *Associate Editor/Design Director*  
Mary Eileen Twyman, *Managing Editor*  
Pat J. Williams, *Assistant Managing Editor*  
Jennifer Osborn, *Assistant Managing Editor*  
Phillip E. Squier, *Assistant Art Director*

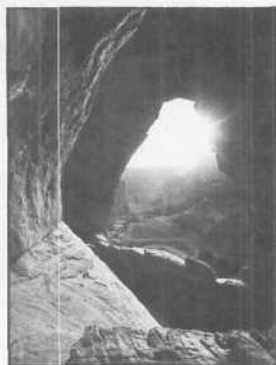
## Contributing Editors

Karen Sausman, *Natural Sciences*  
Wayne P. Armstrong, *Natural Sciences*  
Thomas K. Evans, *Government Affairs*  
Russ Leadabrand, *Field Trips*  
Jerry and Luisa Klink, *Baja California*  
M.R. Zarubica, *Librarian*  
George Aberlich, *Illustrator*

## Business Staff

Donald MacDonald, *Publisher*  
Gary E. Squier, *Co-Publisher and Advertising Director*  
George E. Sector, *Marketing Director*  
Marjorie Moline, *Business Manager*  
Chester M. Ross, *Counsel*

- 4 *Desert TODAY, A Progress Report*
- 6 *DATELINE: INDIO, CALIF.*  
*Lee Kirk*
- 8 *SELDOM SEEN SLIM, The Man*  
*Howell Rommel*
- 12 *SELDOM SEEN SLIM, The Character*  
*Arnold Roth*
- 13 *PATAGONIA, The Town That Time Forgot*  
*Donald MacDonald*
- 17 *BEWARE THE DEVIL'S WIND*  
*C. William Harrison*
- 18 *DANGER! HIGH EXPLOSIVES*  
*B. J. Cosley*
- 20 *ARCOSANTI, The Shape of Things to Come*  
*Gary Squier*
- 27 *THE CACTUS CITY CLARION*  
*Edited by Mary E. Twyman*
- 28 *DESERT ROCKHOUND*  
*A New Column by Rick Mitchell*
- 30 *FAIRVIEW, A Little-Known Nevada Ghost Town*
- 32 *DESERT CALENDAR*
- 35 *OUR READERS WRITE*
- 36 *MISSION SAN XAVIER DEL BAC*  
*Kaye Ann Christie*
- 40 *THE WINGED TIGER*  
*Karen Sausman*
- 48 *WHAT'S COOKING ON THE DESERT?*  
*Stella Hughes*
- 50 *BUYER'S GUIDE TO METAL DETECTORS, PART II*  
*Compiled by Ernie Cowan*
- 53 *RAILROAD IN THE SKY*  
*Buddy Noonan*



The Cover:  
This month we look at the amazing contrasts of Arizona, and David Muench captures the color and the contrasts of that great state in his cover photo of Canyon de Chelly at daybreak.

USPS 154-940  
ISSN 0194-3405

Desert Magazine is published monthly by Cactus Paperworks, Inc. Officers: R.C. Packer, President; Chester M. Ross, Vice-President; Donald MacDonald, Vice-President; Gary E. Squier, Vice-President; Marjorie Moline, Secretary. EDITORIAL, CIRCULATION, AND ADVERTISING OFFICES: 74-425 Highway 111, P.O. Box 1318, Palm Desert, CA. 92261. Telephone: (714) 568-2781. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: U.S. and its possessions, Canada, and Mexico: 1-year, \$9.00; 2-years, \$17.00; 3-years, \$25.00. All other countries add \$2.00 U.S. currency for each year. See

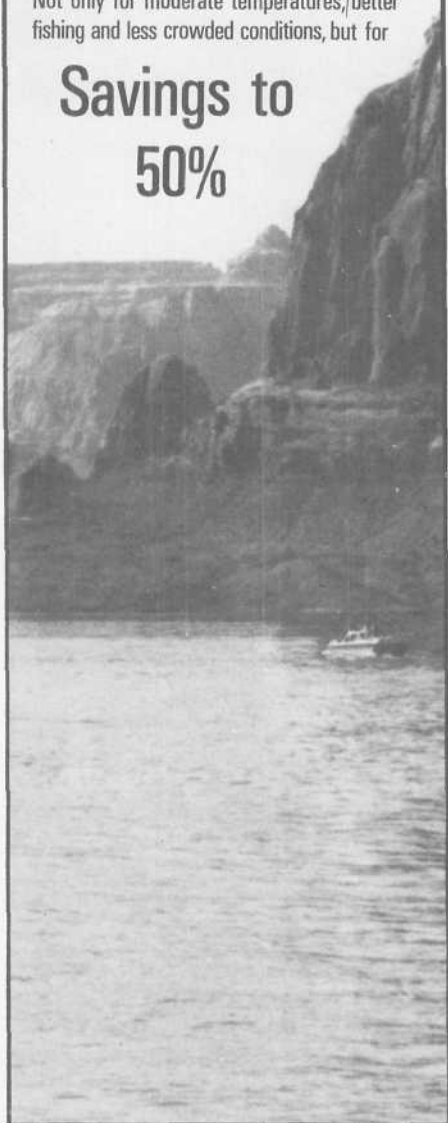
subscription order form in this issue. Please allow five weeks for change of address and send both new and old addresses with zip codes. Second class postage paid at Palm Desert, CA., and at additional mailing offices under Act of March 3, 1879. Contents copyrighted 1980 by Desert Magazine and permission to reproduce any or all contents must be secured in writing. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope or international exchange coupons.

## LAKE POWELL OFF-SEASON IS JUST AS BEAUTIFUL

It's the greatest for summer family fun. Wahweap, Bullfrog and Hite resorts/marinas are open year around, *but you really should try us in the spring, fall and winter...*

Not only for moderate temperatures, better fishing and less crowded conditions, but for

### Savings to 50%



Send color and rate brochures on  
Wahweap, Bullfrog and Hite resorts/marinas

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

**Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas** DM

Box 29040, Phoenix, AZ 85038

New central reservations system:

West of Mississippi call toll-free 1-800-528-6154.

In Arizona, call (602) 264-8466.

## Desert TODAY A Progress Report

Pride is wont to be disparaged nowadays by the new culture of counselors and therapists and their flocks, perhaps because it transforms too easily into vanity and then complacency. But we are proud here at *Desert Magazine*, proud of our "new look" and of the first stirrings of success that have come as a result.

Actually, it is not a new look at all except contributions from techniques and processes we use that were not available to founder Randall Henderson 42 years ago. Every area of coverage, every department, you see in this issue of *Desert* has its parentage in Randall's pilot offering, November, 1937.

Let me take you inside our production department. *Desert* is printed on web presses by a process called lithography. Our present 60-page magazine runs through three webs which each have two sides. To open just one of these sides to color, just eight pages, costs nearly \$1,000 over and above the basic cost of the printing and paper. But you told us you wanted more color so all but two of our forms, or sides, are open to color.

Then when we purchase the desired transparency from the photographer (or take it ourselves), it must be "separated" preparatory to printing. These separations cost as much as \$130 each, and you'll find 26 of them in this issue alone.

But my purpose is not a treatise on the economics of publishing. Our goal in the transition from old to new was first, to please loyal readers, many of whom treasure complete collections of *Desert Magazine*, and then of equal importance, to attract new readers.

I write this on December 15, just 104 days and three issues since our little corporation, Cactus Paperworks, took over. On that September 3, 1979, *Desert* was losing subscribers at the rate of about 200 a month. Today, we are *gaining* subscribers at that rate. Distribution to newsstands has nearly doubled, and national advertisers are being attracted by what they see happening.

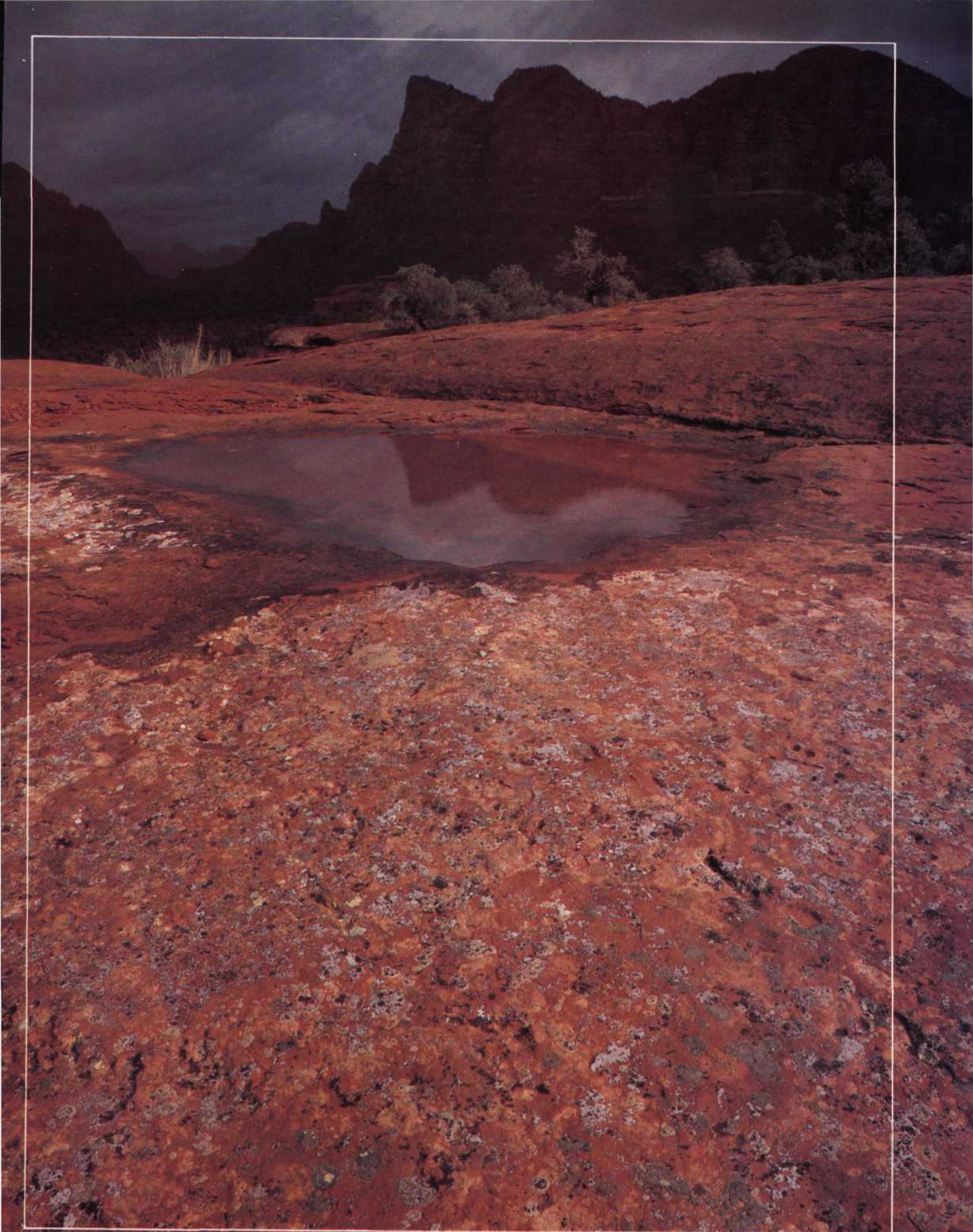
*Desert Magazine* is what is known in the trade as a vertical, or regional, publication. Its interests and those of our readers are limited to clearly defined geographical boundaries with the exceptions, perhaps, of a desert we know about in Hawaii and the possibility that a lifestyle formed in the Sahara or Gobi might find fertility in the American Southwest. That is our range of view and we shall remain within it.

In this issue you'll find more substance than ever. We visit Arizona and tell you about Arcosanti, the desert city of the future, and Patagonia, the desert town that time forgot. We recall Seldom Seen Slim at home in Ballarat and, exclusively for us in the months to come, famed cartoonist Arnold Roth re-creates Slim, the professional desert rat, in pen and ink. And on page 28, minerology expert Rick Mitchell starts his new column, "The Desert Rockhound."

Good reading, a happy and prosperous New Year to all of you and please remember, friend or stranger, you are always welcome here at our offices in Palm Desert, California.

Donald MacDonald  
Editor





STORM, OAK CREEK CANYON, ARIZONA Photo by David Muench



*Frantic real estate development has endangered date groves throughout the Coachella Valley. Photo opposite page: Many growers have started second crop of citrus under date palms.*







# DATELINE: INDIO, CALIF.

*Story and Photos by Lee Kirk*

"Date Shakes—\$.80" reads a sign seen at many roadside fruit and health food shops throughout California's Coachella Valley. You'll also find this delicious concoction at the retail outlets of the large, established growers such as Hadley's in Cabazon, Shields in Indio, Valerie Jean Date Shop in Thermal, Laflin Date Gardens in Mecca, and Colvalda Date Co. in Coachella.

You've probably wondered who invented this new treat. You'll be surprised, maybe amazed, to know that minus the modern refinement of ice cream (refrigeration), no less than the Prophet Mohammed consecrated the date "the one blessed" and advised all expectant mothers to nourish themselves with dates to improve the quality of their milk and thus insure the good health of their babies. So, nearly 6,000 years ago, dates and milk became a major item in the diet of countless dwellers of the Sahara Desert.

Moslem religious lore refers to God's creation of the date tree in the Garden of Eden that Adam might know good health. Satan, discovering this, wept tears of rage, which watered the roots of this tree and produced the thorns that grow at the base of each palm frond. Moslems also believe that date palms sheltered the birthplace of Jesus—that Mary, suffering great pains in labor, was nourished and her condition allayed by

dates miraculously shaken from trees which did not normally produce at that time of year.

Mohammed's favorite treat, "Complete Happiness" (*Khabis*), was made of pitted dates filled with butter and covered with honey, and eaten with a spoon. Dates, regarded as a confection in our hemisphere, are the "bread of life" in the lands of their origin. A total diet of about three pounds of dates, a loaf of bread, and a quart or so of milk each day can sustain excellent health for six months at a time. Chemical analysis credits the date with iron, potassium, magnesium, copper, phosphorous, vitamins A, B1, B2, D, and C, and invert sugar, which is nonacidic and may be taken by diabetics with no adverse effects.

The migration of the date traces from Mesopotamia (now Iraq), through North Africa and across the Mediterranean Sea to southern Iberia. It then crossed the Atlantic with Cortez to Mexico, with abortive attempts to cultivate it in Cuba and on the Florida Peninsula. From there it came to the American Southwest with the missionaries (more as a decorative item), and the Coachella Valley.

In Semitic lands the entire date palm is consumed in their way of life. It provides materials for shelter, for fuel, and for basket weaving as well as food and employment for millions. Our U.S. yield of a little over 50,000,000 pounds a year,

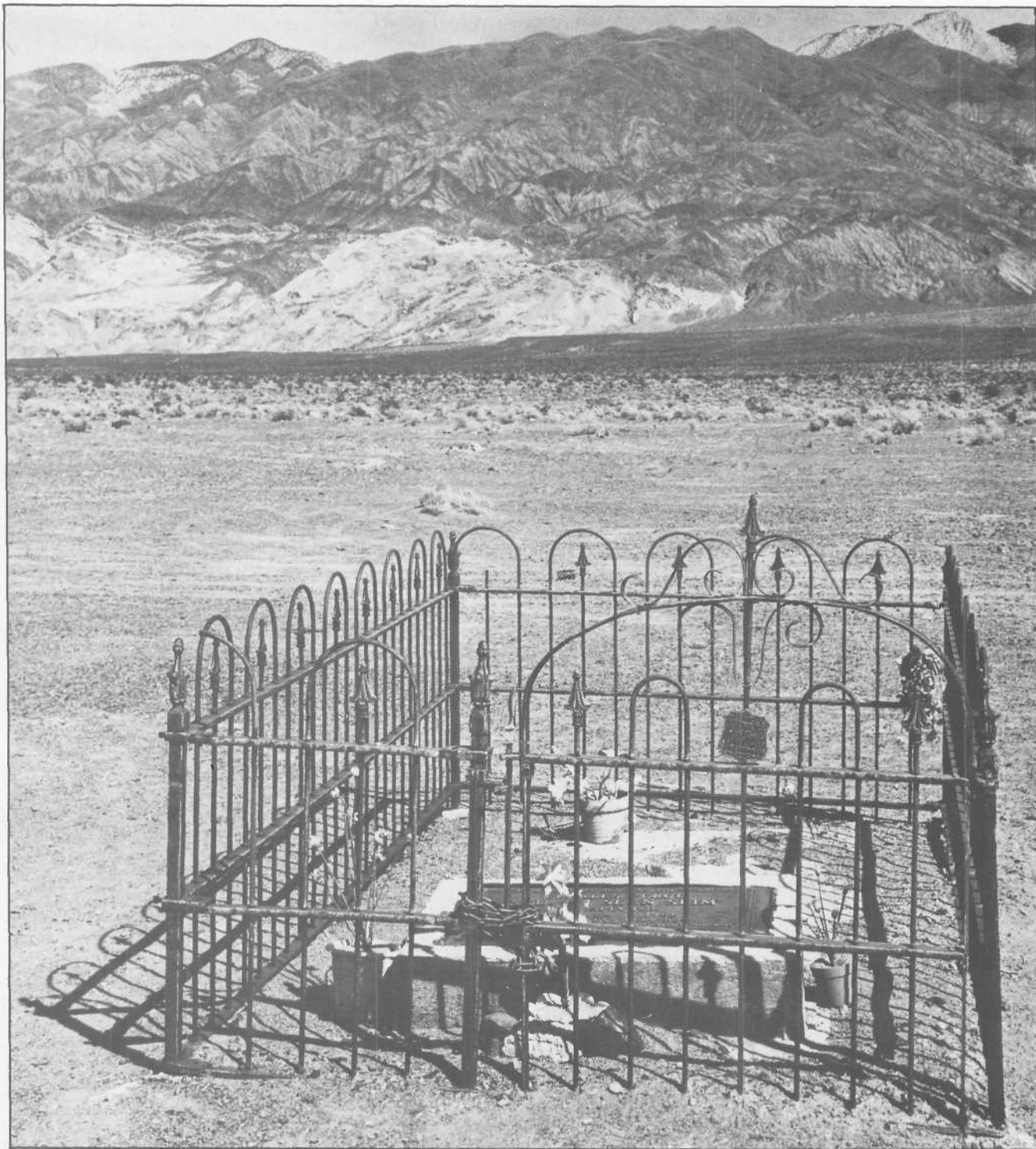
over 90 per cent of which is produced in the Coachella Valley, accounts for about one per cent of the total world crop, though rated among the best. Even so, we export nearly 20 per cent of our domestic production.

On the Iberian Peninsula in southern Spain, date palms were grown in rows to strengthen earthen dams banked against the living trees. These dams protected the low land from periodic tidal floods on the coast. The palm also was adopted as a religious symbol in Catholic pageantry. Now, in our own date center, there has been wholesale destruction of date groves by land developers to make space for golf courses and condominiums. The eerie skeleton-like silhouettes of the scattered tall palms throughout the Coachella Valley have caused many visitors, as well as long-time residents to wonder if this trend is leading to the gradual destruction of the date industry.

The Coachella and upper Imperial Valley areas are the *only* part of the U.S. where the climate, soil quality, and underground water sources are ideal for date culture, so the growers there are concerned. Many acres of new date offshoots are being planted from Coachella east toward the Salton Sea. Many more will be added in the near future. However, new shoots take about six years to reach producing age and nearer

(Continued on page 44)





# Seldom Seen Slim

*Story and Photos by Howell Rommel*

It was the wildflower season of 1961. Lela and I were taking a holiday during the first days of April just to savor the fleeting blossom time in the Mojave Desert. We had pored over maps of the Panamint Valley and the surrounding mountains and had resolved to see the ghost town, Panamint City, that lay at the head of Surprise Canyon in the Panamints.

As we read desert lore we found such legendary names as Breyfogle of lost gold mine fame and Death Valley Scotty, the major-domo of Scotty's Castle. Shorty Harris was down in the histories for his discovery of the Bullfrog Mine that sparked the building of the city of Rhyolite. Chris Wicht was remembered as the last dispenser of strong drink in Ballarat, and

Seldom Seen Slim was apparently the "Kilroy" of the latter-day desert prospectors.

When we stopped on the summit of the Slate Range, Panamint Valley lay at our feet, marked by the old wounds left by man's passing. The desert's man-scars heal slowly. That ultimate outrage, a straight line in nature, violated the western edge of the valley. In 1877, Remi Nadeau, the desert freighter, surveyed and built an arrow-straight road to the Modoc and the Minietta mines. Then, so that the mine owners could the more quickly gut the Argus hills of their treasure, he loaded his 20-mule-team wagons with drilling machinery and blasting powder. The old road is still used, a



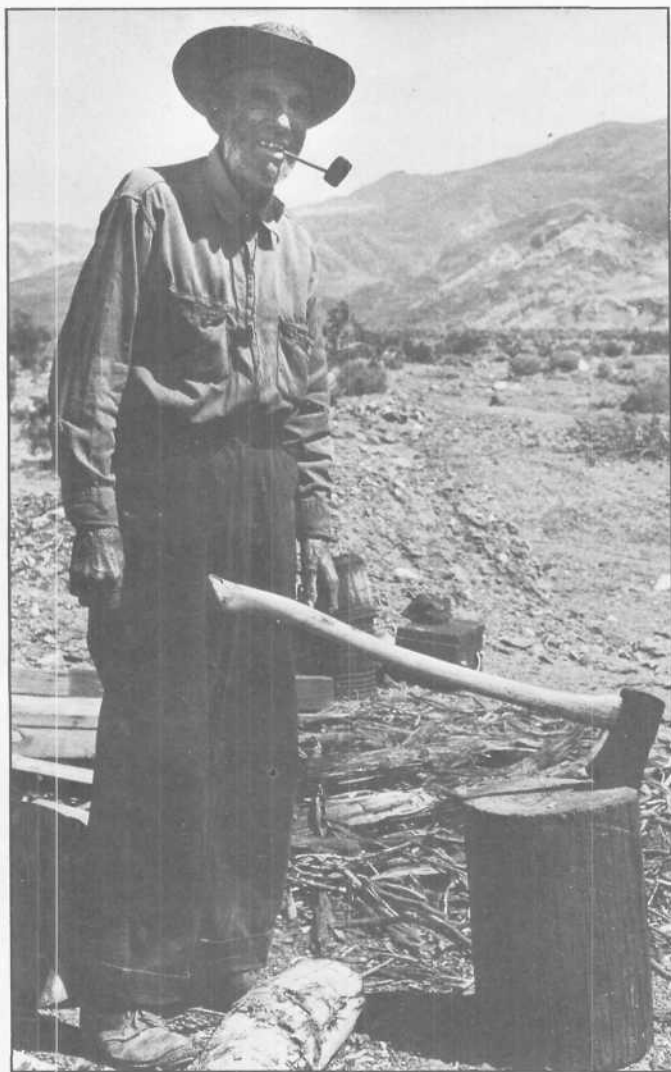
raw gash uncomfortable by bush, tree or curve.

But the desert has a defense which is immense space. Many of man's efforts when seen from the top of the Slate Range seem but flecks in the distance. So it is with the ghost town of Ballarat. Dwarfed by the rise of the Panamint Mountains at its back and lost in the desert reaches at its feet, it seems too trivial to have lived as mightily as it did at the turn of this century. Although the town consisted of a mere 96 building lots, it was the trading center for miners from miles around. One storeowner sold out to his bookkeeper when he learned that he was carrying over 2,000 accounts on his books.

We eased our car down from the summit and left the blacktop, headed for Ballarat and eventually, Panamint City. Nothing stirred as we entered the ghostly town. Blind window openings stared from crumbled adobe walls. Doorless doorways led from empty yards to empty desert beyond. A few cabins leaned away from the wind, propped up by poles and old railroad ties. A battered car body rusted in a windswept dooryard. Was this the flowering desert we had come to see?

The narrow roadway widened a trifle. A crudely lettered sign proclaimed: "SPEED LIMIT 100 MILES PER HOUR—IN LOW GEAR." Close by was an ancient, worn house trailer and slouched in its shade sat the figure of an old man in a dilapidated car seat.

It seemed fitting that we stop. I got out of the car, but as I approached the fellow made no move to rise. He wore a dusty, weather-stained straw hat whose low crown had been



Left: Slim's elaborate grave at Ballarat was financed by money found in his trailer. Above photo: Seldom Seen Slim in 1963, the year before his Jeep "ran over" him and wrecked his health.

repaired with a large safety pin. His faded blue workshirt was soiled and unironed. It had been several days since his last shave and even his stubbly beard was dusty.

"Hi," I said. "I'm from Santa Cruz. Rommel is my name, Howell Rommel." I extended my hand.

"Slim," he answered, without rising.

Slim who? I wondered.

It was a clumsy effort, but I ventured: "You're pretty isolated out here. If I write to you, how do I address the letter?" I could have done better.

"Just 'Slim,' Trona, California. 'Seldom Seen Slim'."

Seldom Seen Slim! It was the legendary name I had read about in my books on desert lore. Suspicious that he was taking me for the tenderfoot I surely was, I proceeded to set little traps that might lead him to give me wrong answers to questions about various desert folk. He answered every one perfectly. He was the genuine Seldom Seen Slim whom I had believed long dead.

His tattered old teardrop trailer could have afforded room for nothing but his bed, wood stove, and gas burning refrigerator. The outside walls were patched with bits of board or tin nailed on at crazy angles. A weatherbeaten army Jeep stood by a decrepit board shed. An axe lay on a frayed chopping block near a tangle of rough mesquite-wood limbs.

When I asked about the road to Panamint City he scratched a wooden kitchen match against the trailer side and applied it to an old corncob pipe. When he flipped the burned match away it joined thousands of others semicircling his seat. The pipe gurgled when he drew on it.

"Mmm, yeah, you can make it up there all right, but when you get there, keep away from that old lady livin' across the canyon—she'll take a shot at you!"

On the way we saw a park ranger from Immigrant Station and I sprung the big question.

"Seldom Seen Slim warns us to stay away from the old lady living in Panamint City. What's the situation? *Would* she shoot?"

The ranger, who said his name was Mat, laughed at us.

"You go right on up to the 'old lady's' cabin and tell her you just talked with me. She loves visitors. She wouldn't shoot anybody. Well, she *might* shoot old Slim!"

Aside from the "old lady's" cabin, which we had no time to visit, Panamint City boasted only one building—a small storage shed. A tall red brick smelter chimney on a hillside dominated the narrow canyon where Panamint City had once lain. No smoke had poured from it since 1877. The "city" itself died one day in 1876 when a cloudburst carried it down Surprise Canyon and scattered its bones on the apron in Panamint Valley.

We had traveled to the desert to see the wildflowers in bloom and had found very few. We had climbed Surprise Canyon to Explore Panamint City, but it was no longer there. But we had seen Ballarat and had found a character we had supposed long dead, so we counted our vacation a success. We resolved right there in Surprise Canyon to return next year and get to know Seldom Seen Slim better.

Two years slipped by before Lela and I could again get away to the desert. Again, it was early April. It was as though we had left the desert only yesterday—the same sun, the same domed blue sky, the same limitless distance. Having read more about Ballarat since our first visit, we recognized Shorty Harris's former cabin and stopped our trailer in the side yard. The power of written history is so strong that I thrilled at the touch of the door worn smooth by Shorty's hand so long ago.

A plastered crosswall divided the cabin. On it someone had written, "I found salvation in this boar's nest, 3/28. Praise the Lord!" By what circuitous route had that tormented soul finally reached this pinpoint on the planet? He mentioned no year but I wondered: Had his "salvation" endured since he left the grandeur of the desert?

It was late afternoon. While Lela started the evening meal, I took two large bottles of Coca Cola from the refrigerator and



hurried to Slim's trailer. Nothing had changed—neither his straw hat with its safety pin, nor the semicircle of match stems in the trailer's shade. When I gave Slim my name and presented him with the cold bottles, I got his clear, unspoken message: "Why didn't you bring beer?" Aloud, he said, "I'll put 'em in the reefer when I go in."

I asked him if the road up Surprise Canyon to Panamint City was open. Just as I expected, he scratched a match on the trailer side, fired up his corncob, and tossed the match stem to you-know-where.

"Mmm, yeah, you can make it all the way, but when you get there, watch out for the old lady on the other side of the canyon. She might take a shot at you."

Nothing had changed in Ballarat! I wanted to know more about Slim's feud with "the old lady," but a further question about her brought this response: "I see you're stopping at Shorty's place. Used to live there myself, after Shorty died. I've lived in every cabin in town one time or other since 1913. When they leaned too much I moved out and just propped 'em up." It was plain that his problem with the belle of Panamint City was too painful to discuss.

"Shorty was only five feet tall with his hat on," he mused. "Used to be a woman named Bessie Hart had a mine and a two-stamp mill at Stone Corral up Pleasant Canyon. She was homely as, uh, she was really homely, and built like a dray horse. Shorty came by the mill one day when she was at her anvil sharpening some drill bits. He liked the way she handled herself and proposed to her right there. She gave the red-hot steel a couple more licks, looked Shorty over slow-like and said, 'No, Shorty, no. You're a nice guy, but there ain't enough of you!'"

Slim continued, "Shorty died in 1934 in Big Pine. Just went to sleep and didn't wake up. They buried him next to Jim Dayton beside the old 20-mule team borax road on the west side of Death Valley, north of Bennett's Well. He was a short man, but he sure used to tell some tall tales!"

The next day, just before the sun rose over the mountain, the moonlight gave way to a soft opalescence. Through the predawn chill we heard the "snick, snick" of Slim's axe as he

chopped mesquite wood for his breakfast fire. Our breakfast dishes done, we shouldered cameras and "just happened" by Slim's trailer. He had located his dwelling Indian fashion, with its door facing the rising sun. There he sat in his open doorway, smoking his pipe. Sure enough, a wide semicircle of burned matches surrounded the doorstep.

Slim was clearly pleased to have a feminine caller and was in a mood for talk. When Lela asked the question for both of us, "Don't you get lonely out here?" he shot back, "Me lonely? Hell no—I'm half coyote and half wild burro!"

Noting the cameras we carried, he said, "Feller came through last fall takin' pictures. He made some of me. Want a couple? They're only two bits apiece!"

Of course we bought some, but most of all I wanted to take pictures of him myself. Money changed hands and we were in business. Slim was almost too willing a subject, a veritable ham, and I had to wait for the moments when he was the real Slim. One came when he answered Lela, "Oh, sure, I've got mines all over these mountains. One's right up Pleasant Canyon there." His unlit pipe was clenched in his teeth and his gnarled hand was extended. A scar on his thumb showed plainly. In that instant he was the authentic Seldom Seen Slim.

"I'm a scientific prospector," he rambled on. "Gave up chasin' burros long ago. Had Fords for years. When Bob Eichbaum opened his toll road from Lone Pine to Stovepipe Wells in 1927 he tried to make me pay toll for running my flivver over it. I said, 'Now Bob, you wouldn't take money from a poor prospector just for using your little old road, would you?' 'No, go on through,' he sez." Slim chuckled at the memory. "Old Bob didn't know it, but I had plenty money in my bedroll. As long as Bob had that road, he let me go through free."

Slim explained that there was no longer any drinkable water in Ballarat, so he hauled a few jerry cans from Indian Ranch whenever he needed it. "It's only six miles," he explained. He probably didn't make the trip often for it was apparent he had a natural aversion to water.

When I got home I developed the film of Seldom Seen Slim



"Nothing stirred as we entered the ghostly town. Doorless doorways led from empty yards to empty desert. . ."





*It was Slim who propped Shorty Harris's old cabin against the tireless winds, and then moved on to another more sturdy one.*

and compared the prints with my expectations. I knew I had to go back. True enough, the likeness was there, but there was a dimension of his personality I had sensed but failed to record. So the next April found our trailer settled next to Shorty Harris's cabin one afternoon. This time I knew just the expression I wanted to capture on Slim's face. Or would he show it by some gesture or posture, something to portray the secret shyness and hunger for human companionship he so stoutly denied?

So, with some well-cooled cans of beer I walked toward the familiar old trailer. Something was amiss. The Jeep was gone and in its place stood a dusty, black Volkswagen bug. And on Slim's head, instead of the safety-pinned straw hat was a fairly decent felt hat. There was a twist to his shoulders and he seemed literally to have shrunk since last year. Close by his right hand was a cane.

"Hi," I greeted him. "We just parked our trailer next to Shorty's cabin. We're from Santa Cruz."

"Howdy," Slim answered. "Saw you comin' from 'way out on the flat. There was a feller and his wife stayed at Shorty's a year ago. They were from Santa Cruz, too. She was a cute little thing. They had a trailer that looked like yours. Say, you ain't him, are you? Did your wife come, too?"

Slim brightened visibly, but soon seemed to shrink again. Then he explained that on a trip to his mine up the canyon last fall his Jeep had "backed up" over him, damaging both him and the Jeep. He had replaced it with the '57 VW. After that, he had been reduced to using the cane. It was evident in his face that both his body and his pride had suffered. It would have been unkind to photograph him. Assuring him that we would stay in Ballarat well into the next day, I hurried back to our trailer.

We watched another yellow sun set behind the Argus Range and felt the first breeze come searching through the mesquite. Finally we succumbed to deep sleep. Before we knew it, another opal dawn beckoned us to a new day.

The sun had scarcely climbed above the Panamints when we were walking among the crumbling adobe cabins and the leaning board shacks of Ballarat. A myriad pieces of purpling

glass reminded us that the old town had supported seven saloons in its heyday. To keep a proper perspective, we had to remember that the bags in which potatoes, flour, bacon, and beans were sold had long since turned to dust. "The evil that men do lives after them," along with their broken bottles.

We heard a shuffling crunch on the gravel and saw Slim with his cane, limping his way toward us. He was no longer the erect figure we remembered and I was glad I had decided against taking pictures of him. He had donned his best attire in honor of "the cute little thing" he remembered from last year and had come visiting. As we three ambled past crumbled adobe walls and reached the cemetery—"This used to be the general store; this was Chris Wicht's saloon"—we asked him who kept flowers on the graves.

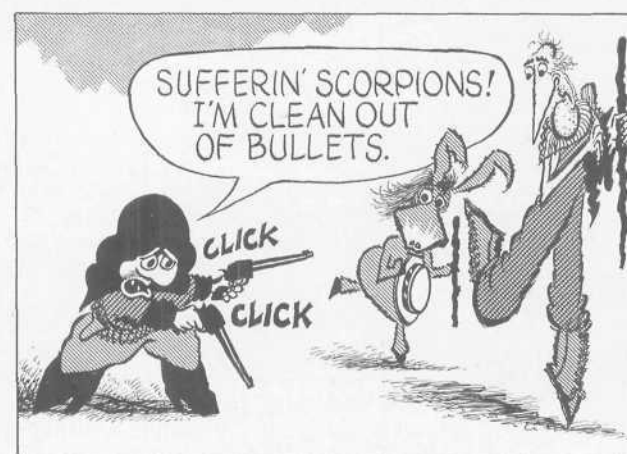
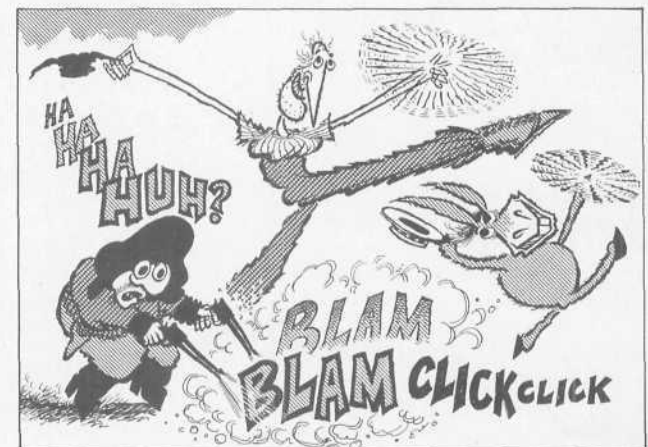
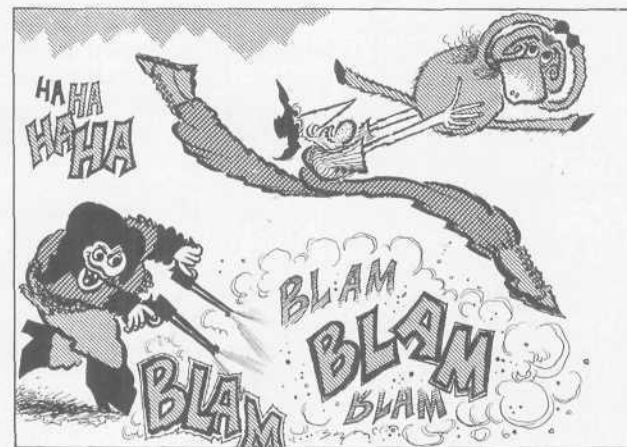
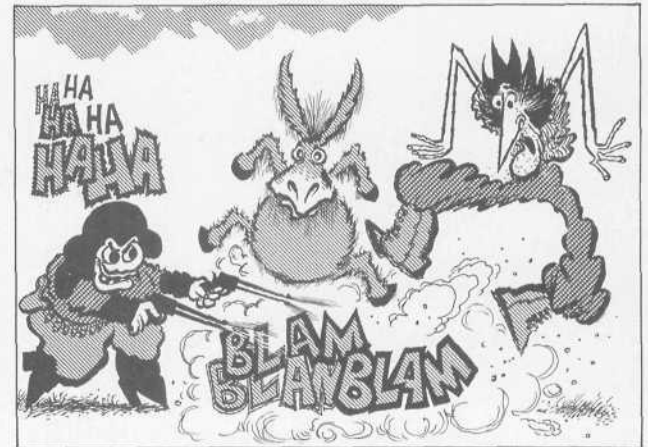
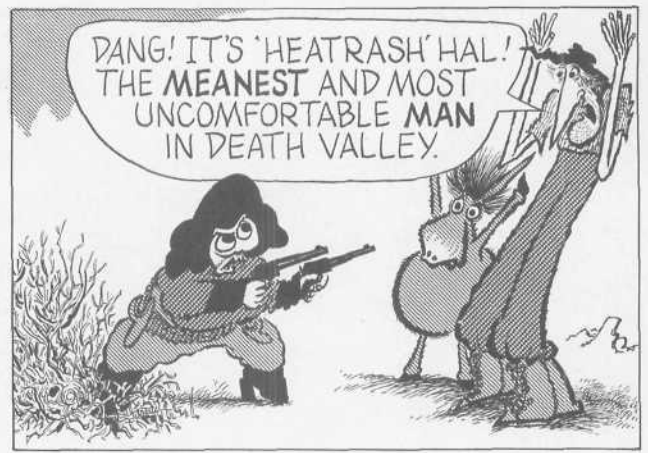
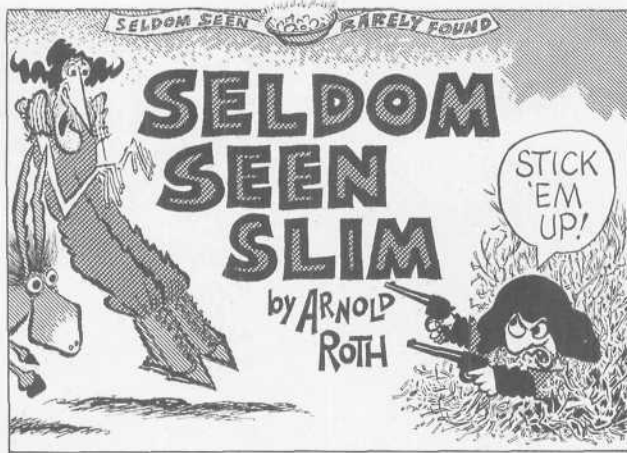
"Oh, I put 'em out there. It ain't much of a chore; ain't but 27 graves in the whole place." This was the man who claimed to be half coyote and half wild burro.

It seemed like only a year had passed, but we realized it had been four when on August 14, 1968, we read a headline: "LEGENDARY GHOST TOWN MINER DEAD AT 86. SELDOM SEEN SLIM TO BE BURIED IN BOOT HILL—THE 28TH PERSON TO BE INTERRED THERE—IN THE FIRST FUNERAL BALLARAT HAS SEEN IN 39 YEARS." Slim rated 29 column-inches on page one of the *San Jose Mercury* and six more on page two—probably more than the other 27 occupants of the little cemetery had ever rated in all newspapers combined.

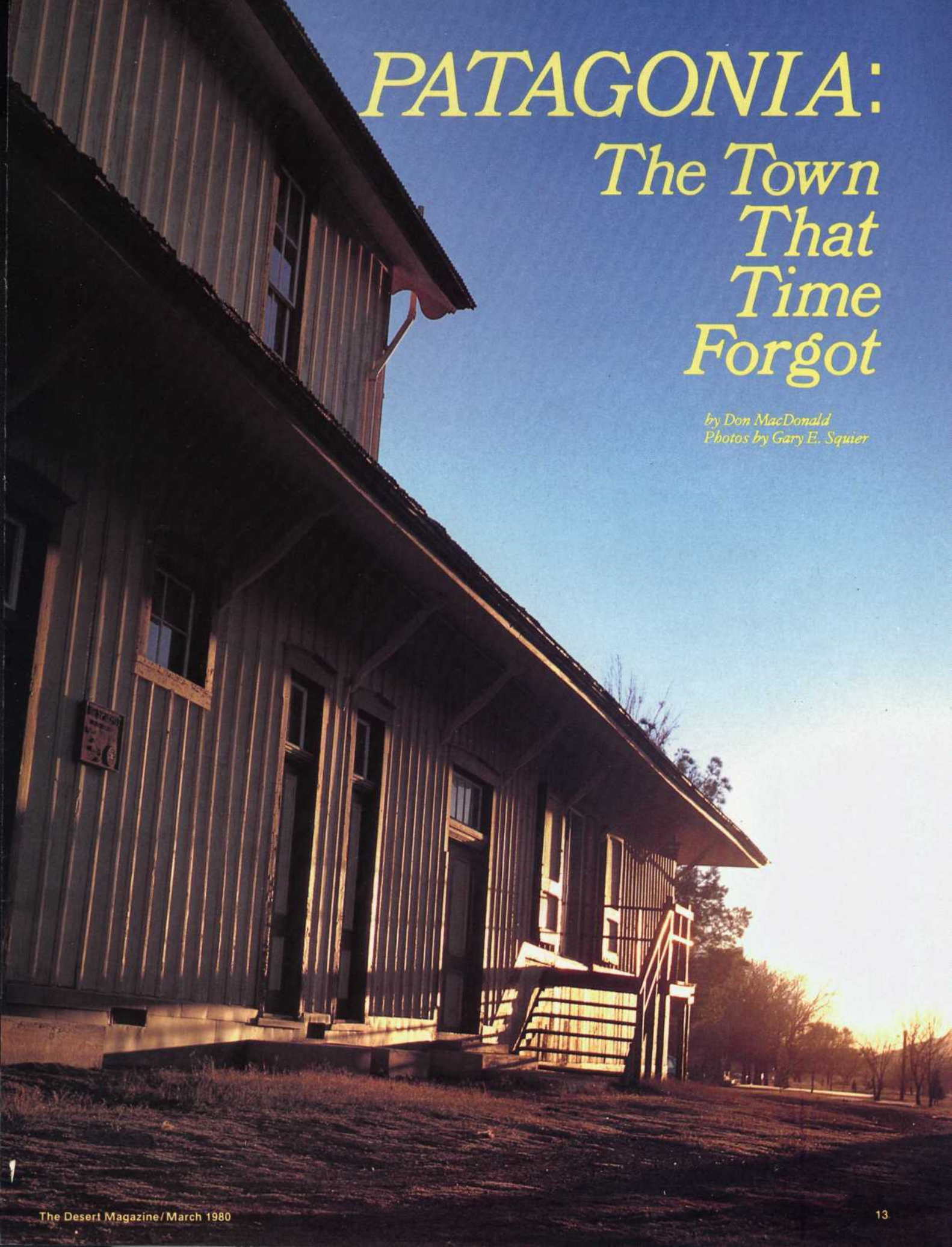
By outliving all "single-blanket jackass prospectors" and by denying his need for human companionship, he had become a legend. He was a product of his environment; the desert paid him no more heed than it did the horned toad or the sidewinder.

Today, as if to make amends for society's neglect of all those who sleep in Ballarat's cemetery, the little graveyard is surrounded by a substantial fence. Slim's grave is enclosed by an ornamental iron railing, and at the foot of his grave, carefully set in stone, is a large bronze plaque bearing Slim's own words: "Me lonely? Hell no! I'm half coyote and half wild burro!"









# *PATAGONIA:* *The Town That Time Forgot*

*by Don MacDonald  
Photos by Gary E. Squier*





**O**ne way to confirm the strange contrast that is Arizona today is to drive west to east on either of the two Interstates, I-10 or I-8, and see first the horizon-bounded acreage devoted to automated cotton farming. Not a bracero or cowboy in sight nor hardly a structure, just towering wheeled machines with air-conditioned cabs.

I-8 evaporates into I-10 at Casa Grande, too far south to see Phoenix. I-10 itself, languishing unfinished where it would seem most needed, spills you out onto city streets in an unpleasant industrial district so on that route, you also miss the impact of strikingly modern skyscrapers suddenly emerging from the desert.

You must wait until Tucson, 134 miles further southeast,

for that. It looks ahead like a range of futuristic mountains. You skirt around its base marveling at how the new has swallowed its past. You can't see "Old Tucson" from the highway; it's guarded by a ring of motels. You are directed to it by lighted billboards, commercial boards suggesting you bring your Visa and Master Charge cards with you.

And then, in a matter of minutes, both Tucsons disappear and you're in desert again, climbing through the broad pass between the Santa Catalina and Santa Rita Mountains. On the far side, at the intersection of I-10 and A-83, there's an official sign pointing south to Patagonia. No commercialism, just "Patagonia 34 Miles."

Today hasn't found Patagonia as yet. It's gotten no further



than Sonoita though which we're approaching on one side and Nogales on the other. Sonoita is a move-set sort of cross-road with deliberately askew, wild-west-type storefronts that sell Levis and saddles and real estate. It has its purpose. The real estate office in Patagonia is hard to find and the population there mails in to Sears for its jeans, the unbranded genuine kind.

The first Patagonian I met was Ruth Fitch, a relative newcomer who fled Missouri to Sunizona (half-way between Willcox and Douglas on some maps) and from thence to Westgate (somewhere near Fort Huachuca) and then on to her last stand in the town that time forgot. She wanted to be "near her children" who live in Tucson, just a couple of million acres away.

Ruth, a wiry 62, has had two husbands and would like to forget both. She farmed 500 acres to support one and won't discuss the other. She now prefers to live alone and in Patagonia without a husband one is alone, at least at night.

Ruth favors horses to people and has ever since when very young she got caught galloping her step-grandfather's blind plow horse. The animal had been a race horse before it went blind, she explains. Ruth lets you know she's been around, that she's done things like operate a bullet assembly machine in a St. Louis arms plant early in World War II. She can tell you that the movies are usually wrong, that John Wayne wasn't out of bullets, he was out of cartridges.

So it was Ruth who introduced me to Anne Stradling, 67. Anne is also a refugee but from a very different environment. Whereas Ruth's Dad was a boilermaker on the MoPac, Anne was born in a 65-room mansion in Far Hills, New Jersey. She is the daughter of the late Kenneth B. Schley, Master of the Essex Hounds and New York stockbroker in that order of mention.

Though while Ruth has spent a lifetime nearly graduating from college, Anne never bothered to go. She went to a "finishing" school for girls in Aiken, South Carolina, called Fermata. She went only because it had a girl's polo team. It was 1929 and they let her learn to fly, too.

She was thus prepared when she met and married Jack Webb, trick roping star of the Miller Bros. 101 Wild West Show. Anne's father and mother, who owned 16 original Remingtons, approved of this marriage and perhaps helped the young couple move to Oklahoma and buy what was left of the 101,000 acre ranch after the Miller Bros. went broke.

She worked the ranch with Jack for 12 years, got divorced, and then married another cowboy and present husband, Floyd Stradling. Floyd and Anne are a compatible, thoroughly unpretentious pair. They live in a mobile home and raise quarter horses.

That's maybe because Anne tends to donate everything she inherited or has acquired to her own museum. This is considerable, at last count \$1,000,000 worth not including years of operating the museum at a deficit and building an equally deficit-ridden luxury motel to accomodate visitors.

Anne tried to save the old adobe commercial block where the motel and museum now stand but gave up and bulldozed it. Patagonians were briefly incensed but when her Last Gasp Saloon opened for business at the motel, they came and forgot.



*Opposite: High desert scenery at its best will be found in the Coronado National Forest surrounding Patagonia. Above: Meticulous restoration of historic carriages is part of the Stradling Museum's daily activity. Below: Museum exhibits include original Remington painting and Russell bronze.*







*Ann Stradling sold her Stage Stop Motel recently but the new owners, Dick and Ethel Burmeister, carry on the tradition of excellent food, drink, and lodging at reasonable prices.*

## MUSEUM OF THE HORSE, INC.



Six exhibit halls dedicated to the horse. From early Greek to modern times.

Original Remingtons, Russell bronze, one of four Kachina chess sets in the world, western treasures valued at \$1,000,000.

Fine Indian crafts for sale in gift shop. Just 60 miles south of Tucson on S-83 in historic Patagonia, Arizona.

Open daily 9 to 5.

Your host: Anne Stradling.

The Stradling Museum of the Horse, Inc., is world-famous and rightfully so. Even those who have never come closer to a horse than a bleacher seat at the circus will enjoy it. That's because there's much more to the museum than the name implies.

Two original Remingtons are worth driving at least the 60 or so miles from Tucson to see. Then there are Russell bronzes and one of four Kachina doll chess sets in existence. (Barry Goldwater owns another one). And there's a somewhat battered Imperial Cossack saddle brought to the U.S. along with its owner, Teffon Kautaradge, by Buffalo Bill in 1903. Anne and Jack Webb let Kautaradge live on at their 101 Ranch long after the former Imperial Guardsman was too old to ride.

I noted that Anne is unpretentious. Example: On the cluttered shelves in her museum office sits a beautifully preserved set of Curtis's "History of the American Indian." Edward S. Curtis was a pioneer photographer who spent a lifetime with Indians, financed by a little-publicized grant from financier J.P. Morgan. Another of these 250 privately printed sets recently was auctioned for \$52,000!

And there's more to Patagonia than Anne's Museum. It's a place where you can still buy a house built in 1904, sitting

on an acre or so of ground, in town, with no restrictions against keeping horses or anything else you want in the yard, for less than \$30,000. The house can even be historic, such as that of Ruth Fitch which was moved to Patagonia from Fort Huachuca after having served as quarters for four or so generations of married officers.

Patagonia sits 4,000 feet up, surrounded by the wonderfully scenic and even more wonderfully accessible Coronado National Forest. Would that government holdings everywhere would allow such unrestricted entry to man and beast without a threatening sign or locked gate to be seen.

What I liked best about Patagonia, though, was the park through the length of it. This came about after the Southern Pacific abandoned its branch to Nogales. The railroad gave a strip at least two football fields wide to the town on the condition that it would never be used for anything but a park. In the middle sits the old depot, one of those two story, yellow affairs in an excellent state of repair. It should be a museum, too.

As Ruth put it, she likes living alone, and that's what one can do in Patagonia without ever feeling lonely. Life there is perhaps the antithesis of that planned for Arcosanti whose story begins on page 20. I know which I'd choose.



# BEWARE THE DEVIL'S WIND

BY C. WILLIAM HARRISON

In Southern France it is known as the *vent d'Espagne*, and in Argentina as the *zonda*. In New Zealand it is known as a *Canterbury Northwester*, in the Middle East as a *khamisin*, and in Montana and Wyoming as a *chinook*.

Scattered about throughout the world, there are about 20 indigenous names for this meteorological phenomenon which scientists call a *foehn* (pronounced fern) and which periodically puts a discomfiting and sometimes lethal hex on the lives of human beings. In Southern California it is generally known as a *santana* or, incorrectly but equally frequently, as a *Santa Ana*.

To those who have experienced the unbridled and often capricious violence of a *santana* spilling through canyons and hurtling across mountain ridges, there are only two names that are truly appropriate in describing its plaguy and bellicose disposition—the Devil's Wind, or the Witch's Wind.

Eight or 10 times a year nature brews up the ingredients of a Devil's Wind by creating a low pressure area off the Southern California coast and a high pressure situation above the deserts to the north and east of the San Bernardino mountains.

When these conditions occur, winds are generated that at times may reach hurricane force as nature sets into motion her tropospheric machinery for achieving a new "balance" in atmospheric pressures. Immense masses of warm air from the desert's high area start skidding and tumbling down their invisible skyways to "fill" the cool off-coast low area. It is this enormous readjustment of atmospheric pressures that gives birth to the hot, dry, and brawling gales of a *santana*.

The gusts of a *santana* make themselves known to humans in worrisome ways other than merely driving dust into the eyes, whipping the hair awry or puckishly lifting the skirts of pretty girls. Abrupt changes in air pressures and the winds concocted by them create in some people a syndrome known to Europeans as the *foehn* disease.

Some people who are susceptible to this malady become irritable and cranky, quick to anger for no particular reason at all. Other victims become mentally depressed, troubled by moods of frustration and anxiety. This wind-related syndrome is so widely felt and recognized that it has been blamed for an A to Z assortment of misfortunes and misdeeds—accidents, wife beatings and barroom brawls, murder and suicides, flunked exams and theatrical fiascos, reduced industrial production, and even for the loss of milk in cows. Lonely ranch wives have been driven out of their minds by prolonged winds, and in early California the wind was sometimes offered, and occasionally accepted, as an extenuating circumstance in favor of defendants on trial for crimes of passion.

Medical research reveals that some hypersensitive patients experience respiratory difficulties, headaches, and other symptomatic discomforts 10 or 12 hours before the arrival of the winds. Many authorities attribute *foehn* disease to a shift in the electrical balance in the atmosphere. They believe the malady may be caused by an increase in the proportion of a-

toms, or ions, which carry a positive charge over those that carry a negative charge. This theory is based on investigations which indicate that negative ions are beneficial to humans and that positive ones are not. Meteorologists have discovered that there is a noticeable increase of positive ions 10 or 12 hours before the arrival of a *foehn*—a time as we've said coincides significantly with the appearance of the first symptoms of patients who are sensitive to wind-related mental or physical disorders.

In Southern California it is not unusual for a Devil's Wind to reach velocities up to 80 miles an hour, especially where it comes bursting out of Cajon, San Geronimo, and other mountain passes and canyons. Always unruly and erratic in their brawling behavior, these hooligan winds attack in an unpredictable line. At one time they may cling to the mountainsides, hissing and moaning through chaparral and timber; at another they will zoom aloft from peaks and ridges only to return to earth miles away in a berserk assault on people and property.

The destructiveness of *santana* winds has taken many shapes and patterns, and their annual toll may run into the multimillions of dollars. Heavily loaded diesel rigs have been blown off the highway, house trailers overturned, motorhomes toppled and rolled. Along the coast, costly boats have been yanked from their anchor and capsized, or smashed to bits against off-shore rocks. An estimated 28 billion pounds of dust was deposited on Los Angeles on one occasion, and more than 250 oil derricks were bowled over on another.

In Southern California a *foehn* is particularly to be feared because of the high fire hazard it creates. Funneling through mountain passes and careening through canyons, the air is heated by compression and sent hurtling into areas where trees and brush are already parched from long rainless months. This superheated air literally sucks the remaining moisture out of vegetation, often lowering the humidity to 10 per cent or less. In these explosive conditions, a carelessly discarded match or cigaret is the next thing to a firebomb.

In 1961, an inferno touched off by a *santana* storm resulted in the incineration of 484 costly homes in the hills of Brentwood and Bel Air. In 1970, during the 70 mph gusts of a Devil's Wind, a fire broke out in some rubbish that had been wantonly tossed aside by a passing motorist not far distant from a station of the Malibu County Fire Department. At one time that infant demon could have been pinched out between the fingers. But by the time it was finally knocked down and brought under control several days later, it had become a fiery monster whose enormity had laid waste to an immensely valuable watershed with a perimeter that measured just short of 150 miles. Never trifle with a Devil's Wind. At its best, it can be a source of many worries, inconveniences, and vexations. At its worst, it can be a cruel and implacable enemy of man and all his personal and public treasures. When allied with wildfire, it can destroy grasslands and forests and rivers, and all the colorful and fascinating living things that inhabit them. And it can even destroy mountains.



# DANGER! HIGH EXPLOSIVES

by B.J. Cosley

You're off enjoying a pleasant weekend in the desert and one of your group returns to camp with some old dynamite from an abandoned mine. What would you do?

Harry Hampton of the Institute of Makers of Explosives (IME) advises: "Move it only if absolutely necessary. As dynamite grows older it becomes more sensitive. Any handling or movement must be gentle, tender, with loving care. And the best handling of all is **NONE AT ALL!**"

Instead of old dynamite, suppose it had been a child with a pocketful of detonating caps picked up in a deserted cabin? The warning is still the same. IME's safety message to the public regarding all explosives is "Don't Touch!" Only qualified persons should handle its removal.

"But I've been going to the desert for years, and I've never seen any explosives," you say. Maybe you've just been lucky, because according to William McCorkle of E.I. duPont de Nemours & Co., a manufacturer of explosives, "A lot of it is lying around out there."

The facts are that dynamite abandoned in old mines and prospectors' diggings, particularly under certain temperature conditions, will function today almost exactly as it was intended to function 25 or 75 years ago. The same holds true for blasting caps.

Caps are used to detonate commercial explosives during blasting operations. If handled improperly, they can cause serious injury or damage. Builders, miners, ranchers, all use blasting caps in their work—over 100,000,000 each year. Rigid regulations require extreme care when moving, handling or storing. Nevertheless, some caps are lost, stolen or simply stored away and forgotten. Blasting caps can be set off by electrical fields from almost any source (wall outlets, batteries or even static), from exposure to heat, and from rough handling. Two-way radios operated nearby are particularly dangerous.

The caps are powerful enough to

rip up your face, blow off your fingers, put out your eyes or make you deaf. To make matters worse, they appear to be no more threatening than a small firecracker.

In the California Desert several years ago, three young boys on bikes discovered a box of colored wires and small, shiny metal tubes. Unable to resist this interesting find, one of them tossed the box into his basket and continued down the hot, bumpy road. One hour later there was an explosion. He was lucky! He only lost two fingers, but he could have lost his life. Of course, he had never seen nor



heard of blasting caps.

According to William Digel of the Petrochemical Division at DuPont, the most dangerous find of all is old dynamite. And because it was used extensively years ago, the chances of finding some are far greater. Basically, dynamite contains nitroglycerin plus a "safer," inert material and is generally less dangerous to handle as long as the nitro remains dispersed throughout this relatively inert material.

The cartridges or cylinders vary from seven-eighths to eight inches in diameter and range in length from four to 30 inches. As the dynamite grows older it becomes more sensitive and if it should sit without proper care for a long pe-

riod of time, it tends to "sweat." In other words, the nitro leeches out and crystallizes at one end or on the surface. Dynamite has even been known to turn the board it rested on into a lethal bomb, because the nitro transfers by osmosis. At this point it is more deadly than any rattlesnake. Don't touch it! Don't even go near it!

Not long ago the Los Angeles **Times** reported on a teenager's find in the Mojave Desert. He had been exploring a deserted cave when he came upon a cache of dynamite used in mining operations. Being a good citizen, he carefully removed it to a police station. He was lucky. So were several hundred other. More than 1,000 persons were evacuated from the area while the bomb squad applied chemicals to neutralize the explosives. Officers said the dynamite was about 10 years old and because of its age, extremely unstable.

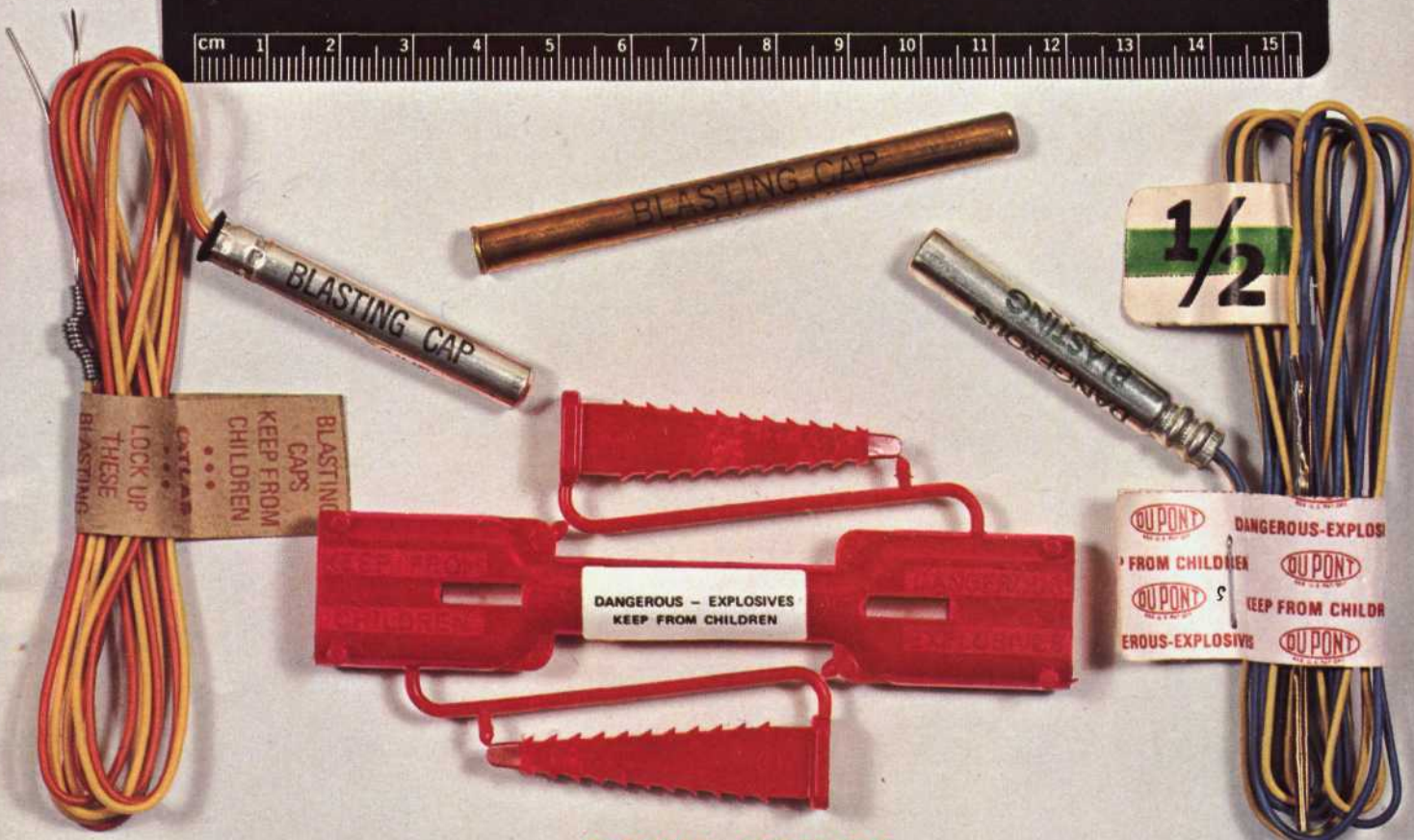
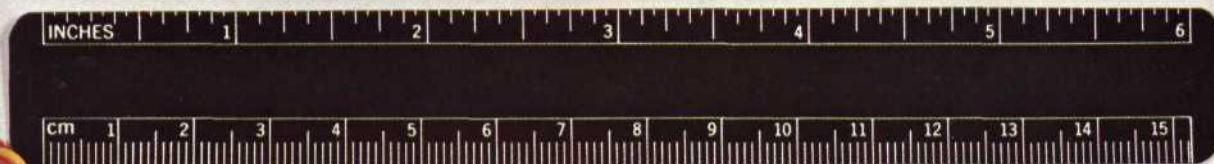
Since weekend outings to the desert often mean exploring abandoned mines, excavations, quarries or ghost towns, don't overlook the fact that these are also considered dangerous sites by the safety experts. The crumbling ruins of a 100-year-old prospector's cabin or the deserted trailer of more recent vintage are two risky possibilities.

So whether you explore the desert in an RV, on a trail bike or on your own two feet, if you want to keep your weekends accident-free, study the pictures on the adjacent page. Pass them around and make sure every member of your family or group not only learns to identify blasting caps but also understands the dangers of explosives.

Remember, should you find anything that looks like an explosive, leave it alone. **Do not touch it or move it.** If possible, post a guard and report your find to public safety authorities—police, sheriff, fire department or military unit. Uninformed, untrained individuals must not dispose of the material. Treat explosives like you would rattlesnakes. Stay Away!



# **HANDS OFF!** **DANGEROUS • BLASTING CAPS • EXPLOSIVE**



## **DON'T TOUCH**

**IF YOU FIND ANYTHING THAT LOOKS LIKE THIS**

**REPORT IT PROMPTLY TO THE NEAREST  
POLICE SHERIFF FIRE DEPARTMENT or MILITARY UNIT**






# ARCOSANTI: THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

*Story and Photos by Gary E. Squier*





*From the shell sculpture [left] that greets the visitor to the massive shapes and curves of its architectural design, Arcosanti is a bold urban laboratory.*

Arcosanti is indeed a very interesting place. It's Paolo Soleri's vision of the future city; one that rises out of the pretty but undramatic mesas 70 miles north of Phoenix near Cordes Junction.

Anybody who can think beyond next month or even Tuesday, let alone the future that our grandchildren will live in, has my respect if not my reverence. But Paolo Soleri is a serious man who has faith in the future he is building. It's in his name which means you were the sun. His brilliant models and drawings of cities of the future startled the architectural world in his tour of museums, libraries, and universities in 1970. Critics called him everything from visionary to dreamer to lunatic. Sticks and stones may break his bones but those names will never hurt him. As long as the sun shines each day for Soleri, he will be out in it directing, advising, deciding how he wants the future.



Soleri is the Director of Cosanti, the non-profit foundation formed 15 years ago to build the foundation of Arcosanti which will eventually be a city of 2,500 permanent residents and about an equal number of visiting students, statisticians, professors, and professionals, and the city will rise 25 stories on 13 acres in the middle of an 860 acre land reserve.

Dr. Paolo Soleri, 60, native of Torino, Italy, author, Distinguished Visiting Lecturer at Arizona State University's College of Architecture, student of Frank Lloyd Wright, and Gold Medal Winner for Craftsmanship from the American Institute of Architects is the *padrone* of Arcosanti. When Paolo is in the room, others talk in hushed voices. When he speaks, *everybody* listens. Good growing weather for skepticism and doubt. But doubt, skepticism, and even cynicism evaporate as you see what this man has done.

You see, Soleri has turned things around. Since 1970 when a few volunteers showed up at the construction site with a wheelbarrow, a shovel or two, and several 100-pound sacks of concrete, people have paid to work for him. That's right, they pay him—about 2,500 of them to date pay \$60 a week for their food, and they work 40-50 hours a week.

In the beginning it was obvious. Soleri saw basic inadequacies in our schools of architecture, city planning, and structural engineering among others. Students who were attending these schools, learning how to design gas stations and motels, had never held a 2'x4', didn't know the difference between concrete and cement, hadn't the slightest idea what backbreaking work pouring forms can be. So Soleri said he'd give them that experience, a place to live, and a stake in the future. They'd have to pay for their own food.



Left: The foundry apse, like all Arcosanti Structures, serves many purposes. It's a work area where metal armatures are made for Soleri bells; apartments built into the apse have basically northern and southern-facing windows; and the floor of the apse can be used for dance, exercise, and sunbathing.





The "work area" is closely linked to dining areas and apartments. The floor can be cleared for basketball, volleyball or badminton.

It seems like a good idea for students but not a very efficient way to build a city. Every five weeks, nine months a year, 200-300 new, inexperienced, flabby, soft kids show up to be taught how to pour preformed concrete molds, build a block wall or to learn the working end of a shovel.

"Two per cent is finished," Soleri says. "We have many miles to go. We must market our product, raise funds, research, study our mistakes and our progress, and go on." The Cosanti Foundation receives no help from any public agencies. To meet the yearly budget that hovers between \$250,000-\$500,000, Soleri lectures in the U.S. and abroad; his books "Arcology: City in the Image of Man," "The Sketchbooks of Paolo Soleri," and "Matter Becoming Spirit," are sold at both Cosanti in Scottsdale and at the construction site of Arcosanti; donations are accepted for tours of Arcosanti. Also Soleri bells are sold, and students are charged tuition for their five-week seminars in construction.

"It's a very difficult task," Soleri acknowledges. "But it must be done."

Why must it be done? Soleri suggests we look at our cities for the answer. Phoenix is 20 miles wide and 50 miles long; Los Angeles is spread out all over the place, Dallas too. People live close to each other in Daley City, but they are not connected to each other in very many ways. At Arcosanti

everything is connected to the idea that the more complex the organism the less space it requires. So the apses of the foundry and the ceramics studio can also be performing shells, theaters, dance floors, work areas, and so can the construction arches. They all are southern facing so that the high, hot summer sun puts the shells in shadow, and the lower spring, fall, and especially winter sun of Arizona fills the shells with light and warmth. In the foundry apse, windows of beehive-like apartments with sufficient room for everyone (approximately 500 sq. ft. per person) are built into the ground that supports the apse. It's all connected, tightly. When it is finished, Elevators and escalators will be the main sources of transportation from work to home to pleasure.

"Our belief in this prototype of the future city supports the notion of complexity," Soleri says. "We are complex beings. So is the bee who lives his life connected to the hive. Our task is to transcribe the complexity of the hive into human terms."

So who wants to live in any city, right? Well, if a recent study by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development is correct when it states that by the year 2,000 the world population will be 6.2 billion (currently 4.5 billion) and that half of the world's population will be living in cities, then one of us, you or I, dear reader, will live in a city. How do you want that city to be?



Soleri and the people around him want one of the alternatives to be vertical, three dimensional, an urban sculpture, ecologically sound, relatively self-sufficient (greenhouses on the southern slopes would produce food and, through the chimney effect, heat), nearly pollution free (no automobiles needed except for travel from city to city or into the country), and economically feasible. All they need to finish the first Arcology (the combination of architecture and ecology) is \$250 million, not an outrageous amount in today's economy. However, the market is not bullish on a project of this immensity that isn't necessary right now. Unfortunately, what would make it necessary is a national disaster, war, pestilence or something else that would draw people together for mutual protection. Not too different from the reason for the feudal manor.

In his book, "Matter Becoming Spirit," Soleri writes about the *Civitate Dei* (City of God) in connection with his plans for an Arcology. His architecture is closely connected to a complex philosophy that believes in the gradual evolution toward pure mind and spirit. Don't get me wrong. Arcosanti is not a religious cult. the 40-50 people who live in Arcosanti year-round are high spirited, intelligent, and well-educated, not Jones-town-like creatures following some false prophet.

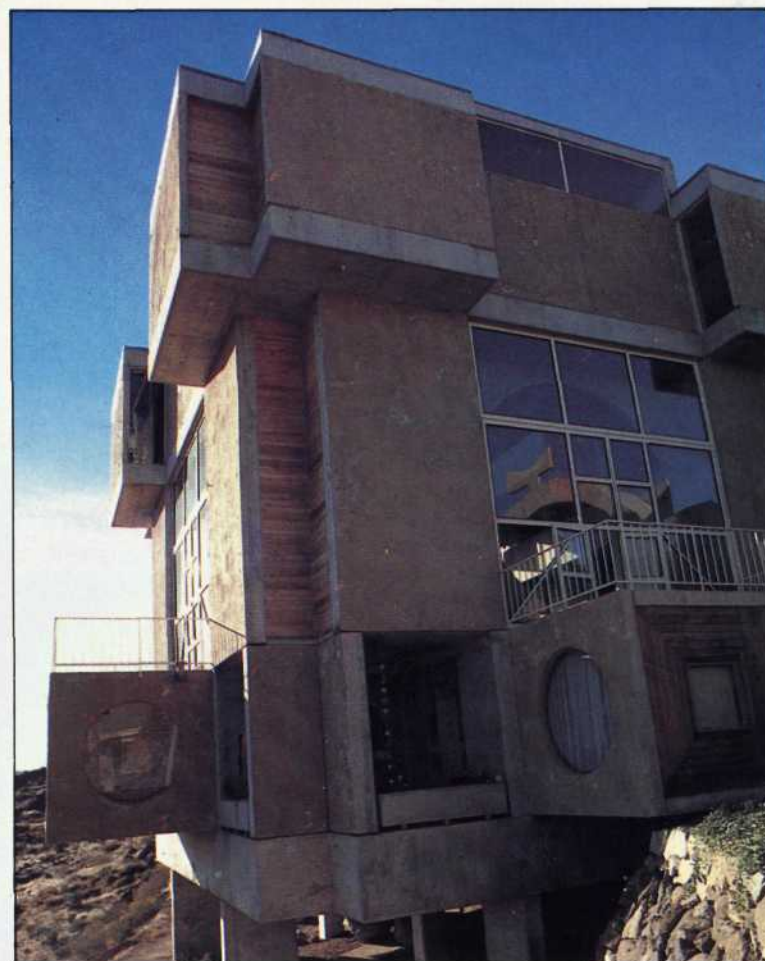
Arcosanti is a spiritual vision in preformed concrete. Some people are attracted to that vision because of the strength of Soleri, his dedication and perseverance, the logical reasonableness of his plan, and because of the need for some rational alternative to the present chaos of city life. Others don't see it that way. Arcosanti frightens some who see it as a brave-new-world concept with horrifying implications of Orwell's *1984*, the idea of advanced technology linked together with the potential for political tyranny. On one of the tours through Arcosanti I heard a young woman say she thought the idea was truly amazing but felt that she could never live so close to other people.

But what a gamble Soleri has made. What risks they have all taken, with many more to come. They have put their money and their muscles where their mouths are for ten years and there's no indication anybody is going to quit. What they are doing *is* exciting, alive, and vibrating with the challenge they are meeting. They project hope, faith, and fresh eyes to the future.

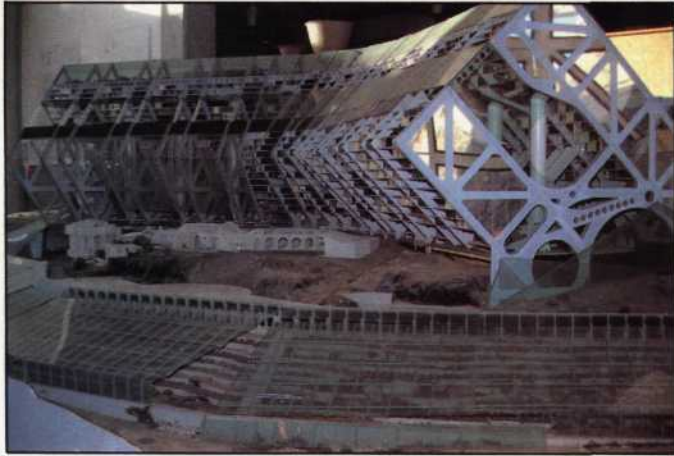
Arcosanti will continue to attract and to appall people because there is true power in its structure, but there are also cracks in its concrete. It is a bold and massive experiment, probably the most significant attempt to solve the urban mess being carried on today.

Could I live there? Yes, I could, though I'd rather not just yet, I hate to say.

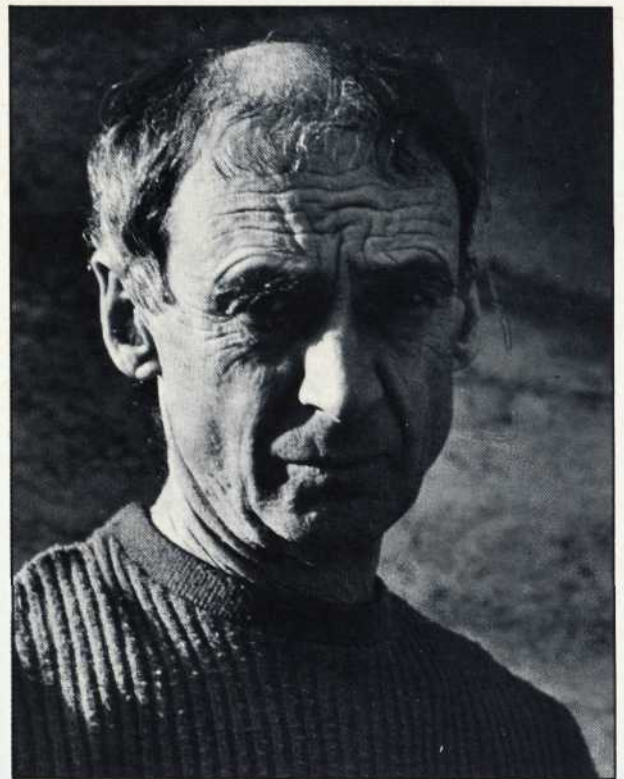
*Next month you'll meet the people of Arcosanti, those who can and do live in this extraordinary urban laboratory.*







Above: Display model of Arcosanti when it is completed. In the foreground are greenhouses that will produce both food and, through the chimney effect, heat. Right: Paolo Soleri. Below: Ceramics apse on a Sunday afternoon.



Top Left: Soleri bells are one of the foundation's main source of income. The foundry and ceramics studio employ about 20 people to produce these internationally known bells.

Bottom Left: The Visitors Center has apartments, studios, and a coffee shop.





## The Man Who Captured Sunshine



by  
Katherine Ainsworth

"If you want to read a book that is so entertaining you will not be able to put it down, then Katherine Ainsworth's 'The Man Who Captured Sunshine' is the answer. It is the engaging biography of John W. Hilton, one of America's foremost desert artists and a man of many accomplishments . . . highly recommended reading!

—Desert Magazine

"Over 70 and still growing, Hilton, the noted painter of desert scenery, spins more yarns than Mr. Bojangles, beginning with his boyhood in China to recent excursions in the wilds of Mexico. Combining science and humorous anecdotes, he tells of discovering gemstone mines and new animal species, selling a koala bear to Clara Bow and fending off sidewinders for Gen. Patton. This entertaining profile includes eight color reproductions of his paintings, photographs and a glowing tribute by friend James Cagney.

—Los Angeles Times

### TO PLACE ORDER:

Please send check or money order  
\$12.95 per copy to:

**DESERT MAGAZINE BOOKSHOP**  
P.O. Box 1318  
Palm Desert, California 92260

California residents add 6% sales  
tax, and please enclose \$1.00 for  
postage and handling.

AN ETC PUBLICATION



# PHOTO CONTEST

Betty Shannon of Placerville, California, is this month's winner of the *Desert Black and White Photo Contest*. Her photograph of the borax vat ruins at Teels Marsh, Nevada was shot in late afternoon (best light). She used Plus-X film shot at 1/250 second at f-11 in her 35mm Pentax. Betty and her husband visited Teels Marsh several years ago but had to go back because the light wasn't right the first time. She certainly got it the second time. Her photograph has all the qualities of a prize-winner: composition, texture, contrast, and appropriate subject matter. There's a memory in this photograph. Nice work, Betty.

Because of the change in issue dates, *Desert Magazine's* Monthly Black and White Photo Contest will continue through our August, 1980 issue. Beginning with our September issue, we will sponsor a color contest. We will publish the rules for that in the upcoming months. Right now we are looking for black and white photographs of sunrises, sunsets, desert creatures, desert people, desert plants, and desert places. There is no limit on the subject matter so long as your photograph is from the desert, any desert. The winning photographs will be published monthly. (\$10 will be paid for non-prize winning photographs accepted for publication.) To enter the contest, your photographs must be in our office by the first of each month.

So come on, you camera buffs. Get out the Nikon, Canon, Olympus, Minolta, Haaselblad or Graflex—or even your Instamatic. The beauty is in the eye of you beholders. Let's get shooting!

### HERE ARE THE RULES

1. Prints must be B&W, 8x10, printed on glossy paper.
2. All entries must be in the *Desert Magazine* office by the first of each month.
3. Prints will be returned if self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed.
4. Contest are open to amateur and professional photographers. *Desert Magazine* requires first publication rights of prize-winning photographs.
5. Judges are from *Desert's* editorial staff, and awards will be made immediately after the close of each contest month.
6. Each photograph submitted should be labelled (subject, time of day, place, shutter speed, film, aperture setting, and camera).

Address all entries to Photo Editor, *Desert Magazine*, P.O. Box 1318, Palm Desert, California 92261. And good shooting.



# OPERA HOUSE BUYS TOWN

Peter Simon's death Valley Junction, for sale with no takers throughout 1979, has been optioned for \$150,000 by operators of the famed Amaragosa Opera House, the condemned community's only present "living" resident.

## Nevada Wilderness Released for Mining Operations

Bureau of Land Management Nevada state director Ed Spang has signed an order to release 420,000 acres of public land in Eureka, Nye and White Pine Counties from further wilderness consideration.

The decision follows a special, accelerated wilderness inventory done to expedite requests to mine gold and barite in the area. That special inventory was released for public comment on Aug. 3, 1979, Spang said. Public comments were received from 17 persons: 15 supported the Bureau's recommendation to release the areas and noted numerous roads and other man-made intrusions, and two stated the area deserved further study.

Spang said all comments were carefully considered and checked. Based on these comments and the information gathered during the Bureau's inventory, he decided to release the areas because they lacked naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined types of recreation.

[Continued on page 28.]

The purchase was made feasible from financial assistance pledged by the Trust for Public Land, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic sites and structures.

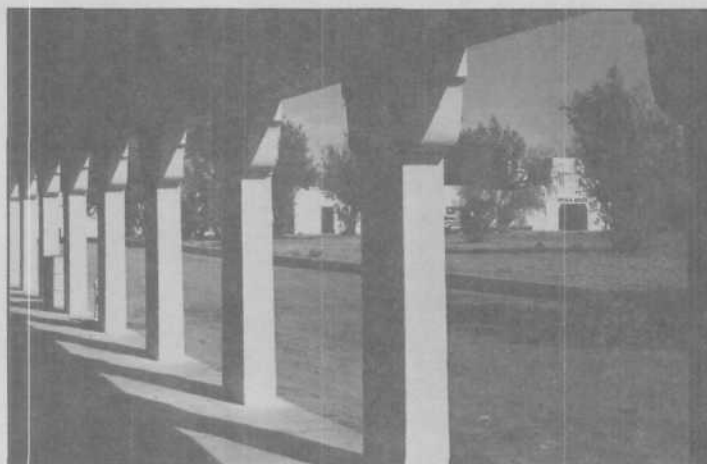
Simon, a Jean, Nevada, casino owner and real estate developer, had previously asked \$300,000 for the abandoned town but no bids were reported. His next scheme was to offer 33 equal shares in the community at \$30,000 each, the funds so raised to pay for restoration and necessary repairs to the municipal water and sewer systems.

State and county health authorities had closed Death Valley Junction in its entirety, except for the Opera House, and ordered it abandoned earlier in the year for alleged pollution of the water supply by contaminants escaping from the antiquated sewer system.

Simon hoped to attract investors interested in establishing a self-sufficient resort community just large enough to feed, house, and entertain a single busload of tourists at a time. The only entertainment, of course, would be famed ballerina Marta Becket's performances at her Opera House.

Aside from the Opera House which has already opened for its winter season, Death Valley Junction consists of a small hotel, a restaurant, a garage and

[Continued on page 28.]



Death Valley Junction was built in 1923 by the Pacific Coast Borax Company to house its employees.

## Tax on Gold Sales Levied on Producers and Refiners.

California has levied a six per cent sales tax on sales of gold bullion by producers and refiners.

Investors have long paid the usual six per cent retail sales tax on gold purchased from dealers but for reasons lost in antiquity when the precious metal was bought from miners or smelters, it was exempt from the sales tax in California.

"It probably dates back to gold rush days when many laws were passed to make things easier for miners," said a legislative analyst. "All we are doing now is closing what has become a loophole."

The new law becomes effective July 1, 1980, and until that time any bullion purchases from

refiners or producers do not apply.

The new sales tax does not apply to industrial purchases of gold by businesses that intend to resell it, such as electronics firms that use gold in manufacturing sophisticated equipment, or jewelers or dentists who make products for resale.

It does apply, however, to business firms that literally consume gold and do not pass on the product to customers in a different form.

An investor in the future may not avoid paying the tax by declaring that he intends to sell it and therefore should be treated as a business.

**Palo Verde Valley TIMES  
Blythe, California**



# BELCH BEGINS BRAWL

It all started with a belch, according to the Blythe Police Department.

It ended with a brawl in the parking lot in front of the Pizza Place in Albertson's shopping center. The incident still has Blythe residents debating the etiquette, pro and con, of belching.

Alta Diane Eugene, 24, of Blythe, reportedly belched in earshot of Burnhilde Hildegard Tooker, 37, and a 17-year-old girl, while all three were shopping in Thrift Drug Store. Ms. Eugene reportedly did not say "excuse me."

The girl, who was accompanying Ms. Tooker, reportedly became amused and began laughing, arousing the ire of Ms. Eugene, who in turn allegedly aroused the ire of Ms. Tooker by berating the latter over the incident.

What next happened was not clear, but the three women apparently finished their shopping—not without further com-

munication—and met later in the parking lot near the Pizza Place.

The ensuing scuffle allegedly involved the three women, a cousin of Ms. Eugene's who happened by, and a reserve police officer. The latter finally broke up the fight, reportedly.

It was not determined at this writing who will be charged in the case.

**Palo Verde Valley TIMES  
Blythe, California**

## Wilderness [cont'd]

criteria the Congress said must exist in a potential wilderness area.

The intensive wilderness inventory on these areas was moved ahead of the statewide schedule (slated for completion by April, 1980) because of two mining companies' plans to begin open-pit mining operations in the areas for gold and barite. BLM had to inventory the areas for wilderness characteristics before permission to do that type of activity could be granted, Spang said.

Details on the areas involved or the public comments received can be obtained from the BLM in Reno or Ely.

**The Eureka SENTINEL  
Tonopah, Nevada**

## Opera House [cont'd]

filling station, and about 30 private homes, all in varying states of repair. Located 19 miles from the National Monument near the junction of C-127 and C-190 and once called Amaragosa, the community changed its name to Death Valley Junction in 1907.

It came alive as a railroad center when mechanization ended the reign of the 20-mule-team borax wagons. Both railroads, in turn, were abandoned in the late 1920s when trucks took over shipments from the borax pits.

The Opera House was once a movie theater for Pacific Coast Borax Co. employees and the hotel was used by company executives.

Tom Williams, Marta Beckett's husband and manager, told the *Clarion* that his group must raise \$85,000 to consummate the purchase and will pick up a note for the remainder. He anticipates \$300,000 will be needed to repair the sewer and water systems and to finish restoring the community's main buildings. He expects to obtain matching public funds for the project.

Williams plans to establish Death Valley Junction as a student center, a "desert campus" unaffiliated with any university, where seminars and classes will be held on desert-related subjects. It will be available, Williams said, to any legitimate

group for this purpose.

The Opera House has been unaffected by the community's civic problems and changes in ownership. The curtain rises at 8:15 p.m. on Ms. Beckett's one-woman dance and mime every Friday, Saturday, and Monday throughout the winter season. Performances are nightly during the week before Easter. Donation is \$2.50 per person.

## Record Claims Filed by Californians

Was there a "Gold Rush of 1979?"

Yes, says Herman J. Lyttge, Chief, Branch of Records and Data Management at BLM's California State Office.

Lyttge's branch is just beginning to see daylight after a paper flurry in which an estimated 58,700 mining claims were recorded with BLM in Sacramento.

The influx of paper was brought on by the October 22 deadline for filing claims that had been located before October 21, 1976.

**B.L.M. NEWSBEAT  
Sacramento, California**

**WEATHER REPORT  
March: Hot and Dusty**  
High winds followed by men chasing their hats.

**Indio Date Festival  
Details On Page 33**

# Desert ROCKHOUND

by Rick Mitchell

**Collecting Sites Update:** With the price of precious metals skyrocketing, many formerly "abandoned" mines are now back in operation. Be sure to determine the status of any mine you plan to visit before collecting there. A few weeks ago I went to the Kofa Mountains of Arizona to gather fluorite, vanadinite, calcite, and cerussite crystals which are available on some of the old dumps near Castle Dome. Once there, I was informed that virtually all of the old mines in the vicinity were recently purchased by a mining concern and that no collecting is allowed on any of the dumps, with strict enforcement by the company.

Another area has also been closed to

rockhounds. Copper Basin, near Prescott, Arizona, is no longer open to collectors. The Phelps Dodge Company has ceased issuing permits, and people can no longer pick up samples of the beautiful azurite and malachite which made the area so famous. No reason was given for the closure, but insurance costs are suspected.

On the bright side, however, beautiful fluorescent stones have been found near Arizona's Fourth of July Peak. They look like common brown rocks partially covered with a dirty white material, but under fluorescent lighting these drab looking stones are spectacular. The coating becomes a brilliant orange under

long and short wave, while the brownish rock turns a deep purple. They can be picked up in addition to the banded agate nodules that have brought collectors to this area for years. Take old Highway 80 north from Gila Bend, approximately 24 miles, to the Agua Caliente Road. Travel west another 14 miles. The collecting is a few hundred yards north of the road and extends over a vast area.

**A Helpful Tip:** If you are the adventurous type and like to search for minerals in new or little known areas, send for a list of publications from the Division of Mines and/or Geology for the state(s) of interest. Many of their publications give leads on where to explore. California and Arizona offer particularly helpful booklets covering a wide range of subjects including basic placer mining, roadside [Continued on page 32.]



# THE LIVING DESERT RESERVE

by  
Karen Sausman, Director  
Living Desert Reserve

On February 16 and March 15, 1980 the Living Desert Reserve will sponsor two field trips to wildflower country: Anza borrego State Park and Cottonwood Springs. The tours, leaving at 9:00 a.m. from the Living Desert and returning mid-afternoon, will be led by Director-Naturalist Karen Sausman. You will have plenty of time for cameras, paint brushes, and for keen eyes to record the brilliant shades and delicate shapes of these remarkable flowers.

They are just as remarkable when they are not blooming as when they are. The low-growing flowering green plants that cover the desert floor are largely annuals, or ephemerals. For eight or more months each year, they are many things other than beautiful blossoms: seeds; food for birds, rodents and insects; wind-blown debris in the form of dried up plants or succulent young seedlings, to name a few. The imperative of their annual life cycle is reproduction, the perpetuation of the species. In plants, reproduction means seed production and seed production means flowers whether the "flower" is a rose or a pine cone. When a plant produces the flowers that we humans so enjoy, it means that the plant has been successful; it has survived to maturity and is assured that more of its kind will follow, next year or several years from now.

How has it survived? The desert is a perilous place for plants unless the plant has a technique or two for dealing with the extremes of temperature, the drying winds, and the lack of water. Anyone who has grown so much as a petunia or a rye grass lawn in the desert knows how much tender loving care is necessary for success. This is T.L.C. undomesticated plants never get. They compensate in one or more of three ways: they endure without water like the creosote bush, they enjoy a small but continuous supply of water through long tap roots like the mesquite or the water storing cacti, or they escape the need for water altogether. Wildflowers are master escape artists. As much as 65 to 90 per cent of the annual life span of each of these little plants is spent as a seed, free of the need for water.

These seeds germinate only after sufficient rain has fallen to ensure survival. There must be at least one inch of rain in both November and December plus repeated showers thereafter. A light sprinkle won't do it. The seeds can't be fooled since they are coated with chemi-



cal inhibitors that must be completely flushed away before germination will occur. So sophisticated is this chemical "weather gauge" that it will respond only to rain water that falls from above and seeps downward through the soil to rebuild the water table. Upward moving water does not contain the acids that dissolve the coating—a safeguard against the dessication that often follows upward seepage. In fact, the seed coating will often be entirely re-formed if even a trace of inhibitor is left on a seed after a rainfall. Seeds also respond to precise combinations of temperature and moisture. Consequently, summer seeds are dormant in the winter and vice versa.

When insufficient rain falls, the seeds are content to wait, up to 20 years if necessary, for the conditions that assure success. They won't jump the gun. Seeds that expend their potential without resulting in more seeds doom their kind to extinction.

Whether they wait for a season or many seasons, the seeds are subject to the vagaries of nature—winds, sand, floods, and animal appetites. Wildflower seeds are a vital food source for desert birds, rodents, and insects who are themselves food for other wildlife. In a good year, each wildflower plant produces hundreds of blossoms, each in turn producing an average of 20 seeds. Thus just one plant is capable of making

several thousand seeds, only a small fraction of which will ever germinate. Clearly there is a deliberate and gross over-production of seed.

Unlike large seeds which have wings to help them ride the winds and disseminate themselves, ephemerals have miniscule seeds that disappear into the sand. It takes the sensitive paws of the kangaroo rat or pocket mouse, or the sensory organs of an ant or a beetle, to differentiate between seed and sand. Millions of ants harvest the seed crop, leaving the chaff outside their crater-like colony entrances.

Thousands of rodents collect tens of thousands of seeds and store them in burrows and scattered seed caches. Some rodents eat nothing but seed. They obtain all of their nutritional requirements and since they are able to convert the carbohydrate into metabolic water, the seed supplies their water needs as well. Tight little clusters of wildflowers are frequently the result of a forgotten kangaroo rat cache that has sprouted in the rain.

The interaction between wildflower plants and desert animals is quite complex. The same rain that induces flower growth, for example, also causes millions of insects to emerge from their cocoons, pupae, and other dormant stages. Swarms of insects of many kinds are attracted to wildflower blossoms for food and, in the process, pollinate the plants. Meanwhile, insect-eating animals like birds, bats, reptiles, spiders, and other insects choose this time of plenty to raise their young, thus ensuring that they will survive to reproductive maturity.

If a seed is not eaten, wind-driven sand may bury it too deep to grow or it may be blown to an unfavorable habitat where it cannot take root. If a seed does germinate, the battle is far from over. Seedlings can succumb to sand blasting. Drying winds can cause withering. Floods can uproot the plant. It may also be eaten by a variety of animals including tortoises, lizards, jackrabbits, and other rodents. It is estimated that only 10 per cent of all seedlings live and mature.

As disappointing as a poor season is to wildflower lovers, stunted plants and poor blossoms are further testimony to the wildflower's adaptive ability. When crowding, water problems, and unseasonable weather threaten the crop, the plants respond by cutting back height, [Continued on page 34.]



# FAIR-VIEW

## A Little Known Nevada Ghost Town

by Bruce Mills and Alan Tuck

What's left of Fairview's once prosperous mining district can be seen on these pages. Although the town's boom period lasted only a little over two years, lessees managed to extract over \$4,000,000 in silver and gold ores. Most of this wealth came from the Nevada Hills Mining Company's Boulder and Boulder Number One mines.

The discovery of silver float in 1905 by F.O. Norton marked the beginning of Fairview's short life. However, work didn't begin until 1906 when rich deposits of silver ore were located.

Several claims were purchased by a Mr. Wingfield and a Mr. Nixon, principals of what was later to become the Nevada Hills operation, and the development began.

By 1907, Fairview's population numbered about 2,000 and to serve them, there were 27 saloons, a post office, assay offices, a newspaper, a few banks, and a miner's union hall.

Nevada Hills Mining Company's operations were profitable from 1911 until 1917, the year which marked the end of production. The town then died quickly, leaving only a few lessees to work claims.

**The NEVADIAN**  
Reno, Nevada

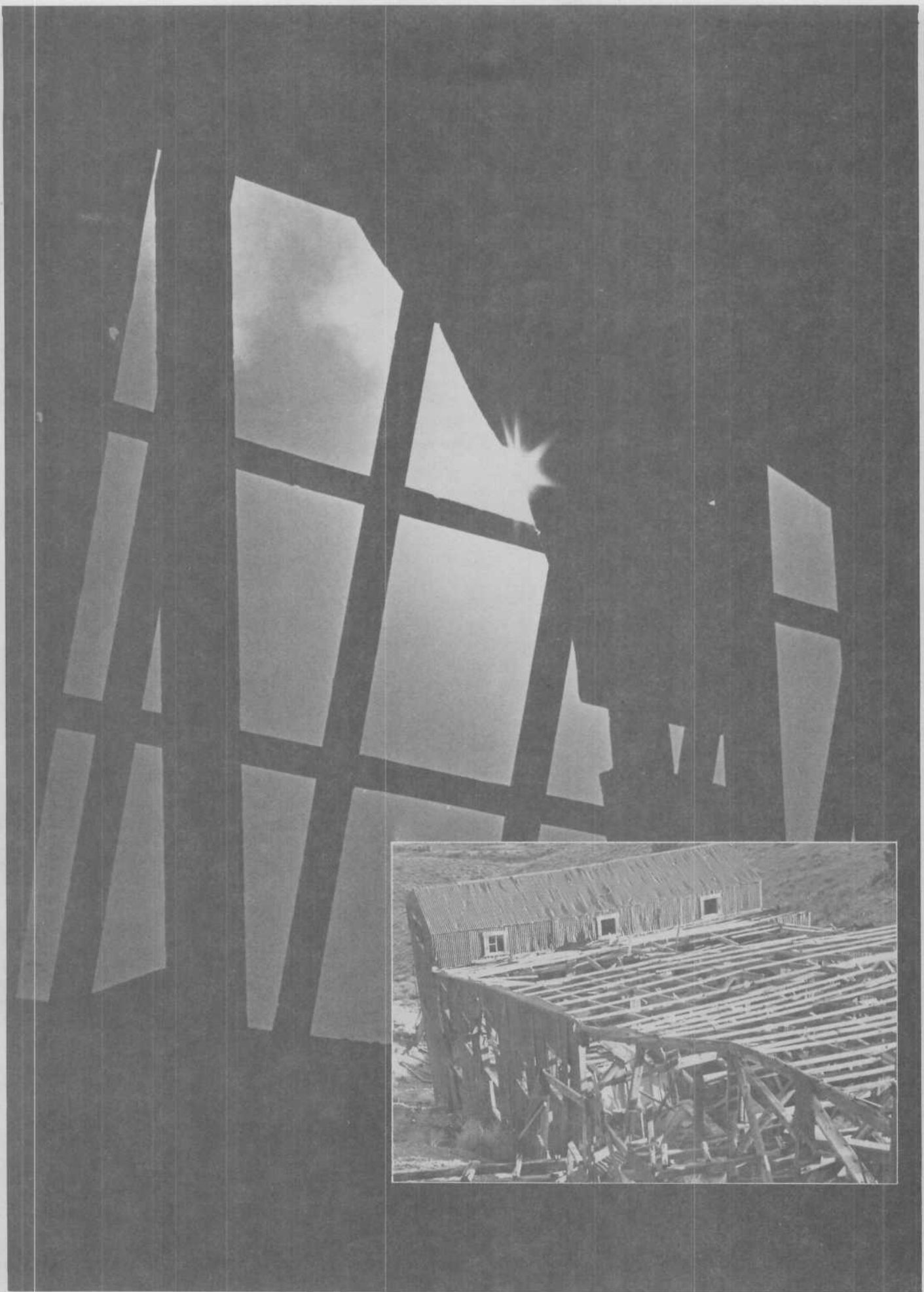
Right: Ghost's eyeview of evening sky at Dromedary Mill is unchanged since 1917 when the Nevada Hills Mining Company closed its Fairview operations. Insert photo: The Mill itself is better preserved than the structure which supports it.



Above: 63 years of idleness has taken its toll of the settling tank. Below: Structures protected by strips from empty cyanide cans, used for siding and roofing in early mining camps, fared better.









## WESTWIDE MAPS

### "IT COSTS TO GET LOST!"

Don't use a road map.

Use a TOPO map.  
Let us help you find  
your heart's desire: Gold,  
Ghost Towns, Hiking Trails  
Travel by-ways or Wildlife.

Just \$1.75 plus \$1.30 shipping  
per order.

(Calif. residents add 6% sales tax)  
We have 29,000 USGS Quads  
of all western states

WESTWIDE MAPS CO.  
Topographic Maps  
114 West 3rd Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Call Walker S. Clute  
(213) 624-2679

"ON YOUR DESK  
TOMORROW MORNING"

# DESERT CALENDAR

February 15-24: Riverside County National Date Festival, Indio, Calif. See page 33 for daily scheduled events.

February 28-April 13: Unseen Flowers of the Desert: desert wildflowers are magnified and photographed by Robert I. Gilbreath. Palm Springs Desert Museum, 101 Museum Drive, Palm Springs, California 92263.

February 28-June 1: Birds of the Salton Sea. Beautiful wood carvings of Salton Sea Birds by Del Smith. McCormick Gallery, Palm Springs Desert Museum, 101 Museum Drive, P.O. Box 2288, Palm Springs, Calif. 92263.

March 1&2: Monrovia Rockhounds' 21st Annual Gem and Mineral show. Masonic Temple, 204 W. Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, Calif. 91016. Mar 1: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Mar 2: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Show Chairman: Al Wagner, 332 May Ave., Monrovia, CA. 91016, (213) 357-2788.

March 14-30: Imperial Valley Gem and Mineral Society's 33rd Annual show in conjunction with California Midwinter Fair, Imperial, CA. Mon. thru Thurs., 4-10; Fri., Noon-10; Sat. and Sun., 10-10. Guided field trip to Mexico, March 8. Parking for campers (no hookups). Admission charged to fairgrounds.

March 16: Annual Desert Gardens Walk of the Anza-Borrego Committee will meet at 11 a.m. at Blair Valley. Walks will be led by State Park rangers. Blair Valley is a few miles south of Scissors Crossing (Highway 78) on Highway S-2 south of Earthquake valley. There will be plenty of parking. Restrooms. Suggest good walking shoes, sun-shade hat, lunch, and water., Information: (714) 7675311.

March 15 & 16: Monterey Bay Mineral Society of Salinas, Inc. 33rd Annual Gem and Mineral Show, Masonic Temple, 48 San Joaquin St., Salinas, CA., 10-9 Saturday and 10-5 Sunday. Donation 50 cents. Under 12 Free. Chairman: Floyd Watkins, 411 LaMesa Dr., Salinas, CA 93901.

March 22-April 1: 33rd Annual Orange Belt Mineralogical Society Show, Orange Show Grounds. 689 S. E St., San Bernardino, CA 92408. Demonstrations and workshops.

March 29 & 30: Santa Ana Rock & Mineral Club "Stone Age '80" show. Laborers & Hodcarriers Hall, 1532 E. Chestnut, Santa Ana, CA. Hours: 29th, 10-8; 30th, 10-6. For information: Ted Wisniewski, 724 Oak St., Santa Ana, CA 92701.

## Desert ROCKHOUND

[Continued from page 28.]

geology, and detailed mining and mineralogical studies of selected locations. These government agencies can save you hours when planning a collecting trip, and the prices are very reasonable.

*Turquoise Losing Ground to Fire Agate:* Not long ago turquoise was the mineral of the Southwest. Its popularity was unchallenged, but things appear to be changing. Prices are generally down from a few years ago, and it is not featured at the shows as frequently as in the past. Fire agate may be becoming the more popular gem, even though it still hasn't the universal appeal of turquoise. This was especially evident at the recent Rockhound Roundup at Gold Rock Ranch, California. Well over one-quarter of the dealers featured fire agate and nearly two-thirds at least offered it for sale. Turquoise, on the other hand, could be found in only a handful of booths.

*Vulture Mine Tours:* The Vulture Mine, south of Wickenburg, Arizona, offers self-guided tours to visitors. The Vulture was, at one time, one of the biggest producers in the country, giving up over \$200 million in gold and silver. You can try your luck at panning some of the "high grade" material from the dumps and actually, nice flakes of gold can sometimes be obtained. The old camp is just how it was when it was abandoned in 1942. A display of gold can be seen in the main building at the entrance. For more information, write John Osborne, P.O. Box 1869, Wickenburg, AZ 85358.

While in the area, be sure to visit some of the other collecting sites in the vicinity. Nice Apache tears and chalcedony can be collected a few miles to the southwest. Inquire at any rock shop in Wickenburg for more information.

*Confused about B.L.M. regulations?* Where can you drive off the road? Where can you drive only on existing roads? Where can't you drive even if there is a road? Where can you collect rocks and minerals? Where can't you collect? The California Division of the B.L.M. has tried to answer these questions with the publication of 23 maps covering the entire Desert Conservation Program area. Each map shows, in detail, what regulations apply throughout that particular area. It designates open areas, closed areas, roads, trails, and private land. The maps do not, however, reflect the wilderness inventory that is still being conducted by the B.L.M., and its findings may alter existing designations. They are useful, though, in determining what is now the law. Send for an index map from the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, 2800 Cottage Way, Room E-2841, Sacramento, California 95825.



# 1980 NATIONAL DATE FESTIVAL SCHEDULED FOR RIVERSIDE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS IN INDIO FEB. 15-24



Any camel would walk a mile to be held by pretty Julie Jenkins, outgoing Queen of Riverside County's National Date Festival.

A full, festive 10 days highlighted by camel and ostrich races, the Funs-A-Poppin Circus, champion fiddler Chuck Beall, the daily and highly competitive National Horse Show, and the free nightly musical "Arabian Nights Pageant" makes Indio and its 33rd Annual Date Festival a must for February travelers.

Queen Scheherazade, 17-year-old Julie Jenkins of Blythe, California, who reigned throughout 1979 will turn her scepter over to a new Queen yet to be selected. Teenage beauties from throughout the Southwest vie for this honor or becoming one of the four members of the Queen's court.

It's always a big show with continuous entertainment, a midway, and thousands of exhibits depicting the Coachella Valley's date and citrus industries. Visiting kids can participate in the newspaper rolling and tossing contest on Feb. 16 while adults can enter the walking race competition the next day. Beards will be judged while your kids are tossing newspapers.

Blue grass fans can enjoy their own competition for banjos, fiddles, and mandolins on Feb. 20 and there's an exotic Arabian Dance Contest on Feb. 23.

For serious showgoers, there are one of the nation's largest gem and mineral shows in its own special building, a photo salon, a fine arts exhibit, and a flower and garden show. Ranching families never miss the junior livestock show and auction on Feb. 23.

Gates open each day at 10:00 a.m. and close 10:00 p.m. The Midway is open till midnight. Grounds admission is \$2.50 for adults, \$1 for children under 12. Call the Festival office (714-342-8244) for information on group discounts for 10 or more persons. All-day parking is \$1.

Indio, about 140 miles west of Los Angeles, is easy to reach from exits on I-10, or follow C-111 south through Palm Springs. Motel accommodations are plentiful and relatively inexpensive, but reservations are advised.

## Jeep

"our only business"

**SALES - LEASING  
PARTS - SERVICE**  
We Service What We Sell

**JOHNSON'S 4WD CENTER**

7590 Cypress Ave. at Van Buren  
Riverside, Calif. 92503 (714) 785-1330

## BOOKS



Order FREE Catalogue

**DESERT MAGAZINE  
BOOK STORE**

Palm Desert, California 92261

**FIRST CLASS MAIL-ORDER  
PHOTO DEVELOPING**  
Kodacolor and Fujicolor



Film returned by  
first class mail for  
**FAST service.**  
Send this ad  
for complete price list

**SPECIAL OFFER!!!**

12 Exposure Color Negative Film  
Developed and Printed  
Jumbo Prints \$1.69

24 Exposure Color Negative Film  
Developed and Printed  
Jumbo Prints \$3.36

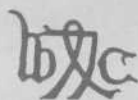
Mail this coupon with order  
Offer expires 60 days after publication  
One Roll Per Coupon

**MARKET BASKET  
PHOTO SERVICE**

**Your Reliable  
Mail Photofinisher**

P.O. Box 2830, 1544 Frazee Road  
San Diego, California 92112  
Kodacolor and Fujicolor  
Print Film Developing Specialists





## The CAXTON PRINTERS, Ltd.

P.O. Box 700  
Caldwell, Idaho 83605

We take pride in the production of fine books for the readers of Western American history — with particular emphasis on the history of the Pacific Northwest and the Rocky Mountain region.

Write for a Free Catalog.

## THE LIVING DESERT RESERVE

[Continued from page 29.]


bulk, and flower production. The same species may mature at 2-½ inches with one flower, or at 12 inches with hundreds of flowers, depending on moisture and warmth. A poor crop is channeling all its energy into seed production for the future. Even one poor flower with seeds is better than none at all.

Colonies of purple sand verbena such as have been seen in sandy areas within the Coachella Valley in past years may be the result of long dormant seed finally responding to optimum temperature and moisture or, perhaps, a ripe crop of seeds having been deposited by rain runoff. Hearty dune primrose will crowd out all competition if conditions are right. When this white flower grows in converging rows as occasionally happens, it is evidence of one more survival technique. Dune primrose dries into a bird cage-like skeleton. Sometimes the seed capsules stay on the skeleton rather than bursting and scattering. The cage blows over and the seeds germinate following the outline of the parent plant, in soil already known to be hospitable. The chance of these seeds landing in unfavorable soil is eliminated.

Verbena and primrose are just two of the most common ephemerals. Notable for their vivid colors are yellow desert sunflowers, violet phacelia, blue canterbury bells, pink monkey flower, purple mat, yellow cassia, and deep blue chia. Close inspection of these plants will reveal several water-saving adaptations which differentiate desert annuals from their mountain cousins, such as much smaller leaves and a waxy or hairy coat on the leaves and stems.

There will be plenty of time to take note of their structure as well as their awe-inspiring beauty on the Living Desert Reserve wildflower day trips. The public is invited, free of charge. Bring your own cameras and lunches. Many of these plants will also be blooming on the grounds of the Reserve—in the wash, on the hillsides or in the botanical gardens—for those unable to go on the field trip. Take a leisurely stroll through the Living Desert any day of the week from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., to see the desert at its colorful best.

For further information about Reserve activities, telephone (714) 346-5694. Meanwhile, here's to the seed!



**CAL-GOLD**  
Metal Detectors, Geologists,  
Miners & Prospectors Supplies,  
Topo Maps, Books.  
SEND FOR CATALOG:  
2400 E. Foothill Boulevard  
Pasadena, California 91107

**MOVING?**  
SO YOU WILL NOT MISS AN ISSUE  
NOTIFY US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Be sure to include old address  
as well as the new  
AND BOTH ZIP CODES!

KNOW YOUR

## Desert WILDFLOWERS

100 DESERT WILDFLOWERS • 100 ROADSIDE WILDFLOWERS  
CALIFORNIA DESERT WILDFLOWERS • DESERT WILD FLOWERS  
COLORFUL DESERT WILDFLOWERS

To order these books, turn to page 47.



## GORDON'S Gem & Mineral

5555 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, Calif. 90805  
Phone (213) 428-6496

Open Tues-Sat. 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sunday 10 to 4:30

Headquarters for:

Closed Monday

- Lapidary Supplies • Jewelry Making • Rockhound Supplies
- Silver & Gold Casting Machines • Cut Stones • Rough Rock

Write for FREE ALL NEW GEM SHOPPER



# OUR READERS WRITE

## PEN PALS WANTED

Sirs: We moved, bag, baggage, grandmother, teenagers and all, to Costa Rica more than three years ago and since that time have been happily settled in Rancho Maricosta. Our experiences merit writing a book for they have not only been exciting but, at times, hilarious. The only flaw was our inability to find easily accessible, registered beach property which was probably a blessing in disguise for it made us look to Columbia where, it turns out, the cost of living is even less than in Costa Rica.

There we found Palmas de Oro, a lovely old coconut plantation on the Caribbean Sea. And to complete its unique and perfect setting, when we look away from the water we see, towering over everything, 19,000 feet high and snow-capped the year 'round, majestic Mt. Columbus of the Sierra Nevada range.

So now we have two loves—our ranch in Costa Rica and our beach in Colombia. We sincerely believe we have discovered a new, exciting American frontier and are eager to share our discovery with others. If you have the idea you're too old for adventure, we are 59 and 63, and both of us have battled and, so far, have conquered cancer! Please send your letters by international air mail (25 cents per half-ounce). We promise to answer.  
Juanita N. Bird  
Guanacaste, Costa Rica

*Mrs. Bird, Costa Rica's one-lady chamber of commerce, can be reached by addressing P.O. Box 157, Liberia, Guanacaste, Costa Rica.*

## THEY LIKE OUR NEW LOOK

Sirs: I like the new look that you've brought to Desert Magazine. I've been a subscriber for a number of years and agree with the need for a facelift. The desert is more popular and accessible for recreation now than ever before. Desert Magazine can fill the gap with interesting and colorful travel information about the arid West. The photos in your Feb. '80 issue are the best yet and are truly beautiful reproductions. And finally an article about Death Valley that was original!

Terry Morse  
Van Nuys, Calif.

Sirs: I wasn't going to renew my subscription until I received your Feb. '80 issue today. This is what the old Desert was like. I feel it relates to the real desert I'd read about all these years.

James R. Osborn  
Rosemead, Calif.

Sirs: At last, Desert has a format that challenges the intellect as well as stimulates esthetic appreciation. Please continue to

publish articles giving a political point of view and subjects by noted authors. After being saturated for years by lost mine stories, we can now enjoy personality profiles and quotable quotes. Thanks for finally exploiting a long unused potential.

Dr. James D. Eagan  
Duarte, Calif.

Sirs: Let me congratulate you on your "new look" and new color photography. Yes, I too have pondered "the shabby stucco dinosaur watching over Cabazon" in what seems to be a determined effort to define the secrets of life. I must confess, though, that my main question is why that unlikely creature chose Cabazon to guard instead of some other place. Quite possibly it sees something unique about the town, but I haven't found it.  
Bob Corse  
Las Vegas, Nevada

The stucco dinosaur, Mr. Corse, was brought to Cabazon years ago when the Wheel Inn's service station sold the now defunct Sinclair Oil Co.'s products. A green dinosaur was Sinclair's trademark. Then, like now, there was a gift shop in its stomach, which is its real purpose for being. And there's something else that's unique about Cabazon. Check out the fantastic "junk" shops on its main street. Finally, thanks to you and the many others who like the "new look" of Desert Magazine.

## Subscribe Now at HALF the Newsstand Price

**Desert**

P.O. Box 1318, Palm Desert, California 92261

☐ Check here if you wish  
this issue replaced

☐ RENEW MY PRESENT  
SUBSCRIPTION

☐ ENTER A NEW  
SUBSCRIPTION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_ [check, money order or charge]

### MY CHARGE:



Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date  
Month/Year \_\_\_\_\_

MasterCharge  
Interbank No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

[Charge not valid unless signed]

☐ SEND GIFT SUBSCRIPTION TO:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Gift Card: "From \_\_\_\_\_"

☐ PAYMENT ENCLOSED

☐ BILL ME

One Year

Two Years  
(Or Two 1-Year)

Three Years  
(Or Three 1-Year)

\$9.00

\$17.00

\$25.00

Foreign subscribers add \$2.00/year postage

☐ ALSO SEND DESERT'S 12-ISSUE HANDSOME  
BROWN VINYL BINDER FOR \$6.00 (Includes tax and postage)

☐ Date Binder(s) with Year(s)

☐ Undated



# MISSION SAN





# XAVIER DEL BAC

Story and Photos  
by  
Kaye Ann Christie



The desert sun bounces off the glistening white dome, scattering the light, sending the rays heavenward. Set down in the reds and tans and browns of the Arizona desert, it is even today a beacon to wanderers from distant places, a landmark for those who are returning home. This is the "White Dove of the Desert," Mission San Xavier del Bac, conveniently reached by a marked exit on I-19.

Bac is an Indian word meaning a place where the water gathers. In the desert region just south of what is now Tucson, Arizona, accessible year-round water was the magnet that drew people from the surrounding area. It was the chosen home of the ancient Huhukam Ootam, "the people who are no more." These early Indians found that here an underground river surfaced, and they used its water to grow their desert cotton.

The Huhukam Ootam were but a memory in 1691 when the Jesuit missionary, Father Kino, first visited Bac as part of his plan to bring Christianity to the Indians of Arizona and northern Mexico. He recognized the gently winding course of the underground river, which he named the Santa Maria, to be the ideal center of his entire mission system. For even in the driest years water could be obtained by digging a shallow hole in the riverbed, water that was a necessity in this parched land.

In 300 years much has changed. The Santa Maria River is now called the Santa Cruz. Today it is a dusty, dry bed, deeply trenched from the raging torrents it carries only a few times each summer. The easily available water is gone. The mission still stands, but it is not the crude structure built by Father Kino. It and the second church constructed by Father Alonso Espinosa in the 1750s have long ago crumbled or been destroyed.

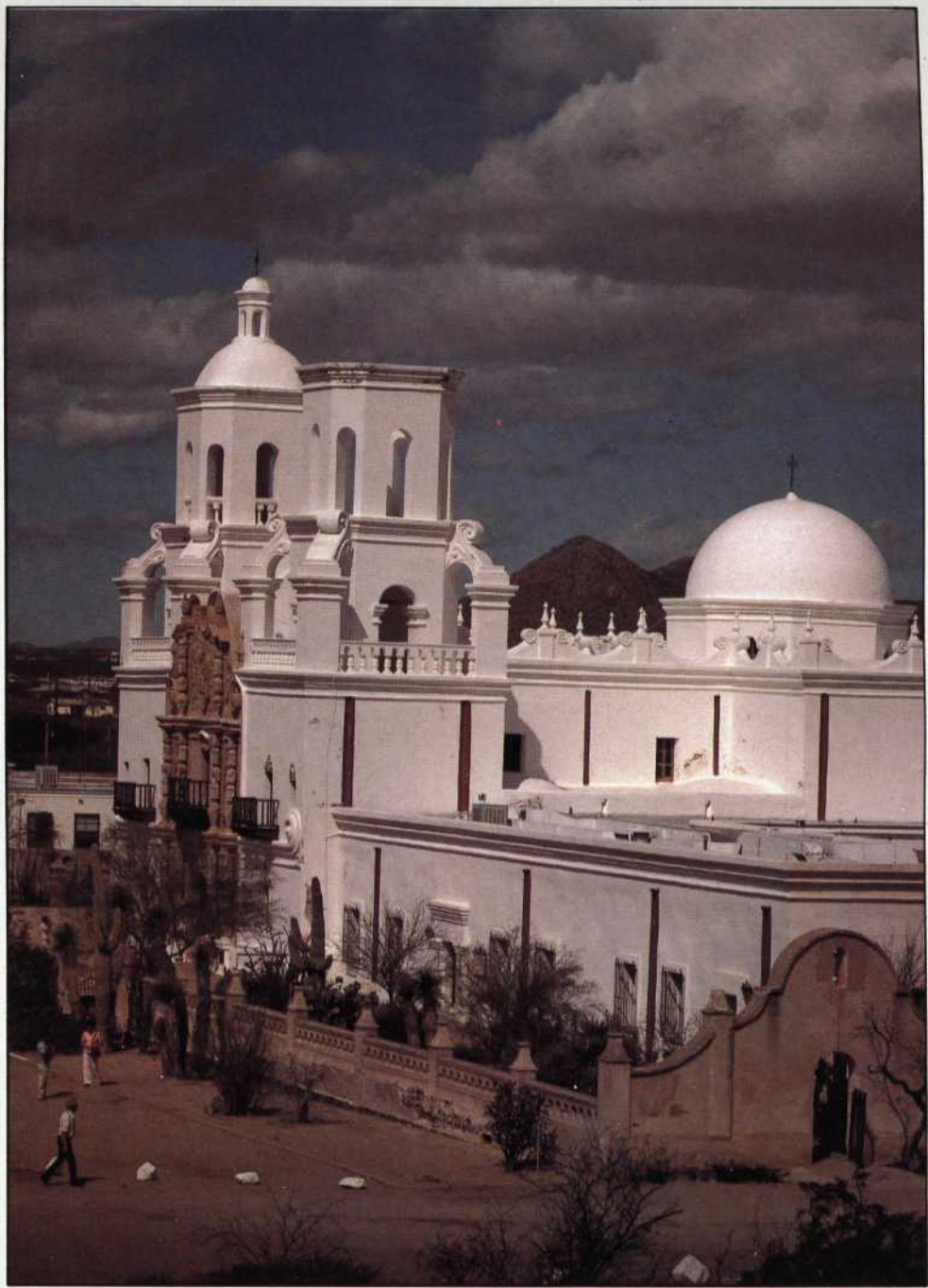
It is the third church, the one created by Father Juan Bautista Velderrain, that we see miles away, stark sentinel of the desert.

Born of the missionary zeal of the Spanish Fathers and begun in 1783 by the willing hands of the converted Indians, Mission San Xavier del Bac represents the crowning ideal in mission architecture. Its style is a combination of Moorish and Byzantine influences, softened and enhanced by the use of indigenous artisans and materials.

Mission Bac was slow in building but was constructed to last. Instead of the adobe of the Pacific Coast missions, it was built of fired brick and lime mortar. Thousands of bricks were required, all made by hand labor, to build walls three-feet thick throughout. Solid six-foot walls were constructed to support the massive weight of the sanctuary dome.

For a mission in the middle of a wilderness, the inside of Bac was unusually well furnished. In 1797, the





*The Convento in foreground was added in the last century so nuns might run a school for Indian children.*

*Mission Bac is the scene of many fiestas, this one with its fireworks being held in April. Photo by Manley Studios.*





*Only the clouds vie with the Mission in whiteness, both contrasting sharply with the muted browns of the surrounding desert.*

year of its completion, Friar Francisco Iturralde visited the mission and wrote: "The walls of the church, the eight-sided drum supporting the main dome, the inside of the dome itself, and also the choir loft are embellished with fine paintings of figures and mysteries of the faith. Although these paintings are done on the wall itself, they convey an illusion of being framed canvases. There are four windows in the main body of the church, all complete with their glass window panes, and four more up in the octagonal drum supporting the main dome."

Friar Iturralde failed to mention the pair of life-sized angels that hang on either side of the sanctuary. Their skirts of heavy canvas were dipped in paint, then draped gracefully about the angelic forms. Tradition holds that the artist's twin daughters were models for the angels.

Under the steady eyes of the heavenly creatures crouch two lions. In a whimsical combination of nature and imagination, one lion traded paws for a pair of human hands.

The wood of the altar rails and the doors reminds us that this is truly the desert. Mesquite, sturdy enough to withstand drought and desert sandstorms, is an appropriate choice in a church built for the ages. After 200 years of touching, of opening and closing, the wood has weathered to a silvery gray, lined as befits great age.

Friar Iturralde's report also commented upon the unfinished tower, one of the mysteries of Mission Bac. All that was needed to finish off the tower to match its otherwise identical twin was a small dome and a lantern on the top. This tower was never completed.

Tradition suggests several reasons. Did the wisdom of the Fathers keep the church unfinished so that the building would not be taxed? Perhaps a workman fell to

his death while constructing the tower and the superstitious laborers refused to continue. Or did they simply run out of money?

Tradition again has the only answers to who actually designed and embellished the interior of the church. It is generally agreed that fine paintings and sculpture are not the work of the untrained. But who was imported to direct the work and complete the finest decorations?

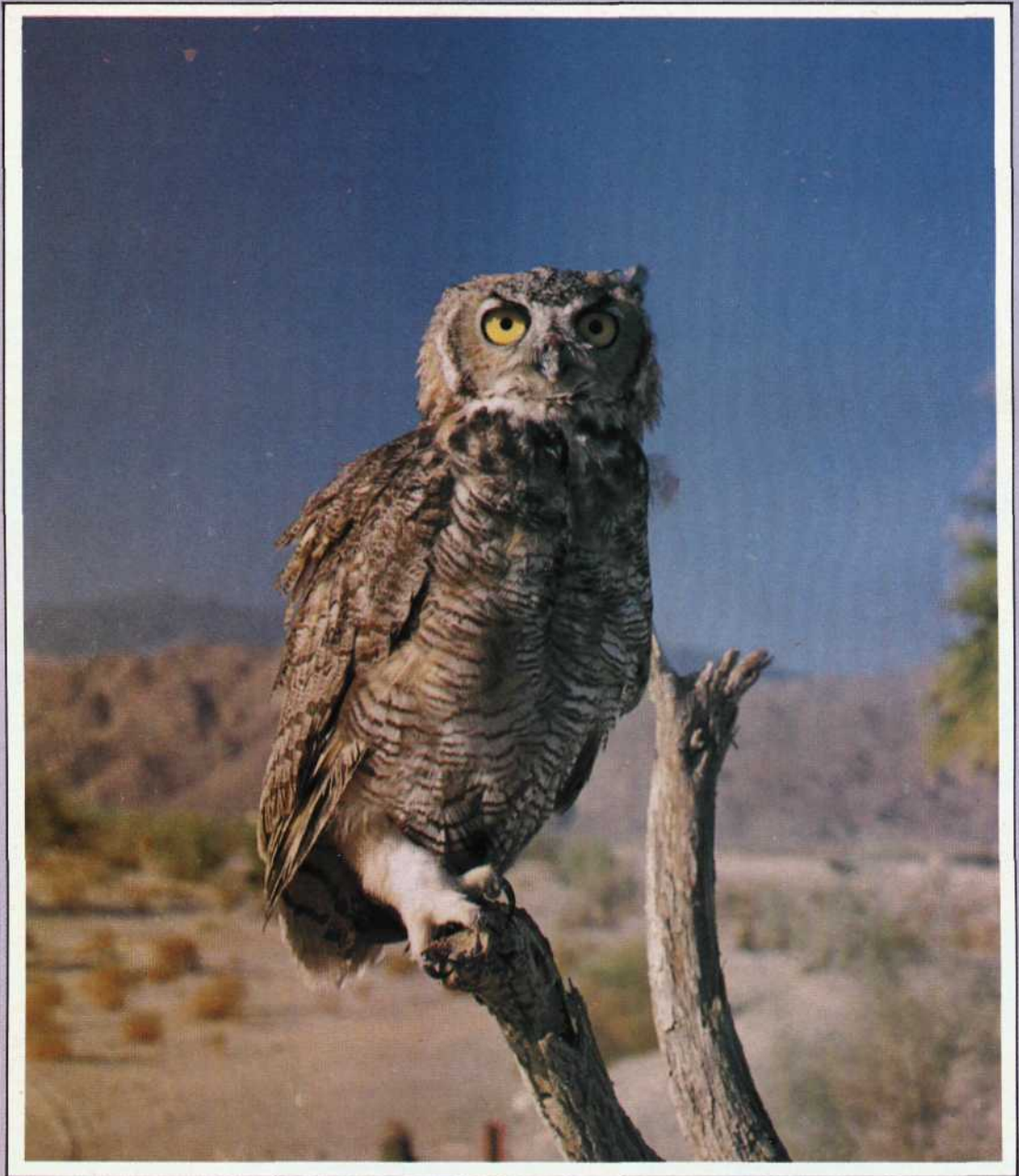
History provides no proof, but legend suggests that an entire crafts guild was brought in from Mexico or Spain. Whoever they were, that their lives were constantly endangered by the raids of the enemy Apaches is proved by a notation made by Captain Jose Zuniga in 1804: "Because of the hazard involved, the salaries of the artisans had to be doubled."

The skill of the artisans is nowhere more evident than in the elaborately worked facade of the church. Only here may the reddish hue of the original color be seen. The rest of the church has been painted white. It is not unfitting, however, for it glows in stark contrast to the desert colors that surround it. And the white enhances rather than detracts from the unrestored facade.

The exterior of Mission Bac supports an amazing collection of statuary, Spanish lions, a coat-of-arms, and an occasional whimsey. Every corner is filled with decoration; even the plain weathered entry has a serpent formed into a door-handle. The Garden of Eden and the Arizona rattlesnake meet at the door of this mission.

A final touch of humor is offered by the designer. On one side of the facade is perched a lively mouse, watched intently down through the centuries by a cat perched on the other side. May they remain there forever for the Indians of Bac say: "When the cat catches the mouse, the end of the world will come."





Naturalist Ernest T. Seton called the great horned owl  
*"among the most pronounced and savage of the birds of prey."*



# The Winged Tiger

by Karen Sausman  
Director-Naturalist  
Living Desert Reserve

For five years the female great horned owl had been in captivity. She had flown into some power lines and the electrical current had nearly killed her. She survived, but the lower portions of both her wings had to be amputated. Yet the fact she could no longer fly hardly disturbed her regal bearing. Every morning she greeted me and those that cared for her in the same awesome manner—fluffing up her feathers, lowering her head, and hissing as she snapped her beak together. And so she warned us that while she was willing to accept our help, she was not interested in friendship.

The famous naturalist Ernest T. Seton in 1890 described the great horned owl as follows: "My ample opportunities of fully observing these interesting birds in captivity as well as in a state of freedom, and indeed all that I have seen of them—their untamable ferocity, which is daily more apparent; their magnificent bearing; their objection to carrion, and strictly carnivorous taste—would make me rank these winged tigers among the most pronounced and savage of the birds of prey." Perhaps the behavior of our captive female is not so unusual!

The great horned owl, with its many subspecies, is widely distributed throughout North, Central, and South America. It can be found from lower arctic regions in the north to the Straits of Magellan in the south. They are primarily a forest-dwelling species, preferring to live and hunt in timbered regions but in California, they are found from the timberline of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to coastal grasslands and desert scrub. They do not migrate.

Great horned owls are among the three largest species of

owls in North America. Their body length is over 20 inches and they have a wing span of nearly five feet. Only the snowy owl and the great grey owl are larger. Great horned owls are grey to grey-brown in color with mottled bands of darker brown on their back and wings. Down the breast, they are slightly lighter colored with bars of dark brown or black. They have a large whitish area on their upper breast and of course, two ear tufts which give them the common name of "horned" owl.

Great horned owls, *Bubo virginianus*, are directly related to the eagle-owls of Africa and Asia. These too have conspicuous ear tufts set above their broad facial discs. All have large broad wings and are capable of soaring with all the grace and power of an eagle or large hawk. Owls of the genus *Bubo* may be found everywhere except in the forests of Australia and the Southwest Pacific Islands.

In late winter the adults begin establishing their territory. Their prolonged hooting at this time fills the night air. The birds begin courtship displays and nesting as early as January or February, allowing them ample time to raise their slow-maturing young. Preferred nesting sites are in tall timber, but desert scrubs will do if trees are not available and they will even use rocky ledges in canyons. While they are capable of building their own nest, it is far more usual to find them using the old nests of either red-tailed hawks, red-shouldered hawks or ravens. In northern climates such early nesting requires constant care of the eggs during stormy weather. Sometimes the nest and even the incubating bird are covered with snow.

The period of incubation is 28 to 34 days and from one to





All owls, even this young one still plumed in down, see as well by night as by day.

five eggs are laid. The young are a little larger than newly-hatched chickens and covered with pure white down. At about 10 days this white down is replaced by greyish-buff down. Gradually the first year's plumage forces its way through the down and within a few weeks they begin to take on the appearance of the adults. The young birds reach full size by the time they are four weeks old, but they remain in the nest at least six or seven weeks and are unable to fly until they are 10 to 12 weeks old. During these first 10 or 12 weeks the young are fed and protected by the parents. Once they begin to fly, though, they start to follow the older birds, begging for food with a high-pitched scream that is only used by the young birds to solicit feeding from the adults. It has been shown that young owls may follow their parents about begging for food well into September and possibly even October before they are finally driven away to other hunting grounds.

The Living Desert Reserve receives several young great horned owls every year. Even those individuals that are brought in at less than a week of age defend themselves from our efforts to take care of them. They bristle up their downy plumage, spread their wings, snap their bills, and threaten to attack. Even at a week or two old, their razor-sharp bill and talons can inflict serious damage.

Hand raising young birds like this takes many hours and a tremendous amount of food. The diet fed at Living Desert Reserve includes a commercially prepared bird-of-prey diet, as well as mice and young rats. Once the young birds have matured and can fly, they seem anxious to be released into the wild and will have nothing further to do with their human "parents."

The adults actively defend their young from predators, even man. Arthur C. Bent in his *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey* describes visiting a nest: "Once I was savagely attacked while I was climbing to a nest in which the

eggs were hatching. I had hardly climbed 10 feet on the big pine tree when the great brown bird glided past me, swaying from side to side, her wings partly spread, her plumage ruffled out, looking as big as a bushel basket, her ears erect, and snapping her bill furiously, a perfect picture of savage rage. As I continued upward her mate soon joined her, and then followed such a demonstration of angry protest as I had never seen; they flew from tree to tree, dashing past me repeatedly, too near for comfort, snapping their bills, and hooting constantly in deep, subdued tones, kr-r-r-oo-ooo, krrooo-ooo. Only once did they give their regular hooting call.

"Once, when I was not looking, I felt the swoop of powerful wings, then a terrific blow on my shoulder almost knocking me out of the tree, and I could feel the sharp claws strike through my clothes. Several times I had to dodge from the furious attacks. As I neared the nest I felt a stunning blow behind my ear, which nearly dazed me, and off sailed my hat a hundred feet away; her sharp talons had struck into my scalp, making two ugly wounds from which the blood flowed..."

Great horned owls are so aggressive and powerful that they often attack and kill surprisingly large prey. They feed primarily on mammals, with rabbits being the mainstay of their diet. However, they also take various species of squirrels, chipmunks, rats, mice, gophers, weasels, skunks, possums, porcupines, and even small domestic animals such as cats. In addition to mammals, the owls are not opposed to taking birds and night-hunting snakes. They are quite capable of attacking and killing even large hawks.

The owls glide on silent wings searching for prey day or night for they can see as well during the day as at night. Sometimes they will perch and wait for prey to pass under them. When sighted, they drop silently down on the unsuspecting creature. The animal is grabbed and killed by the strong talons. Like some other birds of prey, great horned





An angry owl with its fluffed feathers looks less fearsome than like a slightly cockeyed, defensive Mr. Chips.

owls often have regular feeding roosts to which they bring their prey.

Great horned owls as well as other species of owls have evolved the capability to fly in almost complete silence. Owls have a very large wing surface for the size of their body, allowing them quite effortless flight. Also, the feathers of all species of owls are designed to cut down on air turbulence and thus noise. It is quite an eerie feeling to be working at rehabilitating a great horned owl with a wing span of five feet and have it fly by you in the aviary without making a sound!

Great horned owls because of their size and power have very few predators or enemies. Perhaps the most dangerous is man, who is destroying their habitat and occasionally shooting them for the "fun of it." Crows, ravens, and jays often harass the owls. Frequently a person is able to locate a roosting great horned owl during the day by the clamor of a noisy and excited mob of jays. If an owl is discovered by a jay or a crow, the alarm is given, and all of the jays within hearing respond to gather about the owl. They fly around or perch in trees as near to the owl as they dare go. Usually they make no attempt to actually attack. The owl withstands all of this as long as he can, but is usually forced to fly away and is followed by a string of jays. He may have to move several times before he can ditch his tormentors. The only other potential danger to great horned owls is from other horned owls or large hawks. The owls are sometimes attacked, or provoke an attack with another owl or a large hawk, over a nesting site.

Great horned owls—magnificent, awesome winged tigers of the sky. As I visit with our captive female, I can only hope that man will ultimately leave a space in this world for her and all her fellow creatures to survive; leave space for them so that you and I might have a chance one night to be startled by the huge form of a great horned owl gliding silently across a road, outlined by the headlights of our automobile.

## The Bed Shawl™



**It's the  
stuff that dreams  
are made of.**

Leave it to the Irish to come up with a whole new concept in a bed cover. A happy combination of beauty and practicality. It's the bed covering you don't have to take off. Strikingly handsome by day it doubles as a snug blanket at night. Loomed by Irish Tapestry Company at Weaver's Mill, County Louth. Another remarkable product from Ireland.

For more information write:  
The Bed Shawl™  
The Irish Export Board, Dept. D,  
10 East 53 St., New York, N.Y. 10022

## From Ireland. Today.



## DATELINE . . .

(Continued from page 7)

10 years to reach full production. This means that we'll see a dip in the total yield for a few years, so growers fervently hope that building and development patterns will slow down to a more measured and directed pace.

The Coachella date crop has grown from a few acres and a few hundred cuttings to a 1978 stand of over 4,000 acres with more than 200,000 trees and a total crop of over 50,000,000 pounds. The courage and drive of pioneers like Bernard G. Johnson, a water-well driller who believed in the feasibility of large-scale production, was crucial. He went to Africa and with most of the money he had just inherited, plus the patience of a diplomat and dogged perseverance, he dammit *did* it!

In 1912 there was almost no mechanized transportation in Africa. The Sahara was merciless, and many of its dwellers were murderously greedy. Native uprisings, travel by camel caravan, unscrupulous dealers, reluctantly granted export permits, and the problem of getting 3,000 fragile Deglet Noor offshoots back across thousands of miles of unrelenting desert and unwilling ocean, all this exacted a hard year from Johnson's life. And *then* he was faced with the undelightful task of planting these offshoots in the still primitive desert around Yuma, Arizona, and Mecca, California. This meant drilling wells for irrigation water, hand-planting in hand-dug holes six to eight feet in diameter, nurturing these valuable trees to maturity through 125 degree heat, blasting sandstorms, the rare but sudden cloudbursts, and protecting them from destructive pests and diseases. There were *six years* of this before he could count the dates in his *first crop*, almost on his fingers.

Johnson's original date grove is still producing and is viewed by tourists from all over the world. His efforts were joined and extended by determined men like

Henry Simon who imported 6,000 Deglet Noor cuttings in 1913 and whose daughter, Hilda Simon, wrote a book, "The Date Palm," a thorough and well-illustrated story of the date palm right up to 1978 when it was published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

Another major personality in our date industry is Lee Anderson, Sr., founder of Covalda Date Co. in Coachella. Last October he celebrated both his 60th anniversary as a grower and 60 years of marriage to his devoted and wonderfully supportive wife, Ruth. At 91, he still appears daily at the Covalda plant, now operated by three generations of Ander-

sons. Anderson instigated the use of heavy paper bagging of date bunches to protect them from wind, rain, and an insatiable bird population through the summer and fall ripening season.

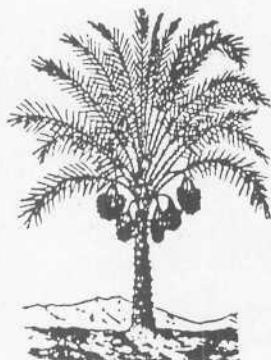
A longtime contemporary, Ben Laflin, founded Laflin Date Gardens in Mecca, now operated by son Ben, Jr., and his wife Pat on more than 200 acres built up since 1912 and shipping gift packs all over the world. They have also developed a lovely date garden for the enjoyment of visitors who are curious about the desert and its wildlife as well as its produce.

About 90 per cent of the date crop



Pioneer grower Lee Anderson, Sr., "invented" Kraft paper bags universally used to protect date clusters from the elements.

## COVALDA DATE COMPANY



### VISIT

- Our Date Packing Plant
- Natural Food Snack Shop
- Gift Shop and Bookstore

### Write For Our Free Price List.

Lee Anderson's Covalda, Inc.  
51-392 Harrison St. [Hwy 86]  
P.O. Box 908D  
Coachella, California 92236

consists of Deglet Noor, the "Date of Light." this variety is smaller and less sweet than the larger, "soft" dates, but is hardier and is more easily handled by mechanical means through picking, sorting, cleaning, detoxifying, pitting, chopping, etc., and packaging for shipment. Sun Date in Coachella, second largest grower and processor of dates, handles up to 40,000 pounds of Deglet Noors per day—9,000,000 pounds in 1978 alone. It is the variety most easily shipped, and it keeps well.

The balance of the crop is made up of Zahidi, a medium-sized round date, brought here around 1900 with the Deglet Noor; Khadrawy, the early-ripening soft sweet date; Halawy ("sweet"), medium-sized amber long





*Date picking and packing is still performed essentially by hand, but the price is reasonable.*

date; Medjool, the "Perfect Date," largest and most delicious; Thoory, best of the dry dates, with a chewy, nut-like texture; Dayri, soft, nearly black, with distinctive flavor, originating from a convent at Dayr, Iraq; Barhi, soft, round, light amber color and rich flavor; in all, eight varieties.

A by-product of dates is a relatively mild palm wine which is relatively rare as it is made from the sap of the tree. This extraction, as with the removal of palm hearts for salad, kills the tree so only trees which are no longer producing are used. There is also a date liquor, "Zarrack," as potent as absinthe.

The planting and cultivation of date palms requires constant care and long hours of hard work in a punishing climate. From February through December of each year careful hand care is required, from pollination of all date-bearing (female) trees and trimming of female blooms to improve date size and quality, later tying down and pruning of bunches, bagging of individual bunches for climatic and pest protection, spraying and trapping of insects, picking the dates at sometimes 60-80 foot heights and moving this delicate crop to the processing and packing plants. Then there is the need for fertilizers and cover crops to enrich the soil, irrigation to keep the soil moist to a depth of eight feet, and post-harvest removal of all dates that have fallen on the ground to prevent proliferation of the date beetle. But the 250 growers in our southwest desert have demonstrated iron will and intense dedication in their successful development of the date industry. Thus, you may be sure of continued growth in generations ahead.



**We Grow Our Own Dates And Citrus Fruit  
Visit Our Scenic Date Garden**

RARE, UNUSUAL VARIETIES  
HIGHEST QUALITY  
GIFT PACKS

**SAY  
IT  
WITH  
DATES**

LUNCH ROOM  
SANDWICHES  
HOMEMADE  
DATE ICE CREAM  
PASTRY

**WRITE FOR FREE BROCHURE  
WE SHIP YEAR ROUND**

*Laflin Date Gardens*

**10 Miles North of Salton Sea State Park, Hwy 111  
One of Coachella Valley's Pioneer Date Gardens**

**P.O. BOX 757 • THERMAL, CA • 92274 [714] 399-5665**



## TREASURES

**BURIED TREASURE & LOST MINES** by Frank Fish. One of the original treasure hunters provides data on 93 lost bonanzas, many of which he personally searched for. He died under mysterious circumstances in 1968 after leading an adventurous life. Illustrated with photos and maps. Paperback, 68 pages, \$2.00.

**DEAD MEN DO TELL TALES** by Lake Erie Schafer. A sequel to *Buried Treasure & Lost Mines* by Frank Fish, the author knew Fish for many years and claims he was murdered. Her book adds other information on alleged lost bonanzas, plus reasons she thinks Fish did not die a natural death as stated by the authorities. Paperback, illustrated, 80 pages, \$3.00.

## DEATH VALLEY

**DEATH VALLEY SCOTTY TOLD ME** by Eleanor Jordan Houston. A fascinating and unusual recount of famous Death Valley Scotty's adventures as told to the author while she and her ranger husband were Scotty's nearest neighbors in 1948. Some of these escapades have never been told before. Illustrated, 116 pages, \$2.50.

**A NATURALIST'S DEATH VALLEY** by Dr. Edmund C. Jaeger. In this revised third edition, Dr. Jaeger covers and uncovers some of the mysteries of this once humid, and now arid trough. He tells of the Indians of Death Valley, the mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, insects, trees, wildflowers and fossils. Paperback, 66 pages, \$2.00.

**SCOTTY'S CASTLE** by Dorothy Shally and William Bolton. The sumptuousness of the castle, its history, construction and design of the buildings are told by the authors, both National Park Service employees who have been associated with the maintenance and interpretation of the property since the government acquired title in 1970. Paperback, large format, profusely illustrated, \$2.00.

## BAJA

**CAMPING AND CLIMBING IN BAJA** by John Robinson. Contains excellent maps and photos. A guidebook to the Sierra San Pedro Martir and the Sierra Juarez of Upper Baja California. Much of this land is unexplored and unmapped still. Car routes to famous ranches and camping spots in palm-studded canyons with trout streams tempt weekend tourists who aren't up to hiking. Paperback, 96 pages, \$2.95.

**A FIELD GUIDE TO THE COMMON AND INTERESTING PLANTS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA** by Jeanette Coyle and Norman Roberts. Over 250 plants are described with 189 color photos. Includes past and present uses of the plants by aborigines and people in Baja today. Scientific, Spanish and common names are given. Excellent reference and highly recommended. 224 pages, paperback, \$8.50.

**BAJA CALIFORNIA GUIDEBOOK** by Walt Wheelock and Howard E. Gulick, formerly Gerhard and Gulick's *Lower California Guidebook*. This totally revised fifth edition is up-to-the-minute for the Transpeninsular paved highway, with new detailed mileages and descriptive text. Corrections and additions are shown for the many side roads, ORV routes, trails and little-known byways to desert, mountain, beach and bay recesses. Folding route maps are in color and newly revised for current accuracy. Indispensable reference guide, hardcover, \$10.50.

## DESERT

**ANZA-BORREGO DESERT GUIDE BOOK, Southern California's Last Frontier** by Horace Parker, revised by George and Jean Leetch. A classic reference to America's largest desert park, originally published in 1957 and now updated, enlarged and improved by the "dean of desert rangers" and his wife. With excellent logs, maps and photographs brought up to 1979 standards. Paperback, 154 pages, two maps, many photos, \$6.95.

**THE ANZA-BORREGO DESERT REGION, A Guide to the State Park and the Adjacent Areas**, by Lowell and Diana Lindsay. A comprehensive photo and text treatment of the world's largest desert state park and its environs told by well experienced professionals. Tours and hikes are laid out in mileage increments. Much history of this region is included. Paperback, with many maps and photos, 165 pages, \$5.95.

**ARIZONA** by David Muench. The finest pictorial presentation of the Grand Canyon State ever published. One of the outstanding color photographers of the world, Muench has selected 160 of his 4-color photographs which are augmented by the comprehensive text of David Toll. Hardcover, 11"x14" format, 200 heavy slick pages, \$27.50.

**BACK ROADS OF CALIFORNIA** by Earl Tholander and the Editors of *Sunset Books*. Early stagecoach routes, missions, remote canyons, old prospector cabins, mines, cemeteries, etc., are visited as the author travels and sketches the California Backroads. Through maps and notes, the traveler is invited to get off the freeways and see the rural and country lanes throughout the state. Paperback, large format, unusually beautiful illustrations, 207 pages, \$6.95.

**THE BLACK ROCK DESERT** by Sessions S. Wheeler. One of Nevada's least-known and most scenic historical desert areas is described by the state's leading professional historian and author. Black Rock is part of the huge Great Desert Basin and was the setting for Indian battles and several tragic incidents during the 1849 California Gold Rush. Paperback, 186 pages, many black and white photographs, sketches and maps, \$4.95.

**HIGH MOUNTAINS AND DEEP VALLEYS** by Lew and Ginny Clark, with photographs by Edwin C. Rockwell. A history and general guide book to the vast lands east of the High Sierra south of the Comstock Lode, north of the Mojave Desert and west of Death Valley, by oldtimers who know the area and have since birth. Paperback, 192 pages, 250 photographs and many maps, \$6.95.

## WILDLIFE

**BACKPACKING GUIDE TO SAN DIEGO COUNTY** by Skip Ruland. An informative, no-nonsense primer to day hiking and extended several-day trips into the Southern California mountain and desert back country, covering more territory than the title suggests. Also this little book contains emergency information useful wherever you hike or travel in the back country. Paperback, 80 pages, several maps and sketches, \$2.95.

**BIRDS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN DESERTS** by Gusse Thomas Smith. Thirty-one of the most commonly sighted birds of the Southwest are described and illustrated in 4-color artist drawings. Heavy paperback, 68 pages, \$3.95.

**EDIBLE AND USEFUL PLANTS OF CALIFORNIA** by Charlotte Bringle Clarke. This unique book is a guide to identifying more than 220 plants used by both American Indians and pioneers for food, fibers, medicine, tools and other purposes. It also tells how to prepare, cook and otherwise use them. Plants are organized by habitat communities. Descriptions, photos, drawings and distribution information are given. An excellent reference. Hardcover, 280 pages, \$10.95.

**A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN'S GUIDE TO WILD FOOD** by Christopher Nyerges. This newly published manual describes the most common plants of So. California in detail and tells how to include them into your diet. Beat the high cost of food by utilizing free wild food in backyards, vacant lots and the wilderness areas. Many recipes included. Paperback, \$4.95.

## GHOST TOWNS

**GHOST TOWNS OF ARIZONA** by James and Barbara Sherman. If you are looking for a ghost town in Arizona this is your waybill. Illustrated, maps, townships, range, co-ordinates, history, and other details make this one of the best ghost town books ever published. Large 9x11 format, heavy paperback, 208 pages, \$5.95.

**COLORADO RIVER GHOST TOWNS** by Stanley W. Paher. The skeletal remains of abandoned mines and towns in the Cerbat mountains and other barren ranges in western Arizona along the Colorado River are visited by the author. Two editions are available: the standard edition is a large format, paperback, lavishly illustrated with rare old photos, \$2.95; the second edition available is identical with the exception of an insert of 15 beautiful four-color reproductions of etchings by noted artist Roy Purcell, and is hardcover. This edition sells for \$9.95. Please state which edition when ordering.

**CALIFORNIA GHOST TOWN TRAILS** by Mickey Broman. Thirty-six photographs showing some of the old towns as they appear today, not as they did 50 or 100 years ago. Thirty-six maps with detail mileage to the ghost towns, shown to the tenth of a mile. Interesting and historical data for treasure hunters, rockhounds, bottle collectors and western-love enthusiasts. Paperback, \$2.95.



# SELLING BOOKS

Please add \$1.00 per order  
for Postage/Handling  
Calif. add 6% state sales tax

## WILDFLOWERS

**100 ROADSIDE WILDFLOWERS** by Natt Dodge. A companion book and with the same format as **100 Desert Wildflowers**, this book lists 100 flowers found from 4,000 to 7,000-foot levels. Also has 4-color photographs. Slick paperback, 64 pages, \$2.50.

**DESERT WILD FLOWERS** by Edmund C. Jaeger. One of the most complete works ever published on flora of the Southwestern deserts. Easily understood by amateur botanists and travelers as it is informative to the professional. 322 pages, well illustrated, \$3.95.

**CALIFORNIA DESERT WILDFLOWERS** by Philip A. Munz. Illustrated with both line drawings and beautiful color photos, and descriptive text by one of the desert's finest botanists. Paperback, \$3.95.

**100 DESERT WILDFLOWERS** by Natt Dodge. Each flower is illustrated with a 4-color photograph and described in detail, where found, blooming period, etc. Habitats from sea level to 4,000 feet. Slick paperback, 64 pages, \$2.50.

**COLORFUL DESERT WILDFLOWERS** by Grace and Onas Ward. Segregated into categories of red, blue, white and yellow for easier identification, there are 190 four-color photos of flowers found in the Mojave, Colorado and Western Arizona deserts, all of which also have common and scientific names plus descriptions. Heavy, slick paperback, \$5.95.

## INDIAN LORE

**RELICS OF THE REDMAN** by Marvin & Helen Davis. Relics can be valuable! Those dating back to Indian history in our land are becoming almost priceless, say the authors. How to search for these "hard to find" Indian relics, where to search and at what time of year, and types of tools needed, are among the many helpful suggestions given. Large format, many color and b/w illustrations. Paperback, 63 pages, \$3.95.

**HOPI KACHINA DOLLS [With a Key to Their Identification]**, by Harold S. Colton. Kachina dolls are neither toys nor idols, but aids to teaching religion and tradition. This is a definitive work on the subject, describing the meaning, the making and the principal features of 266 varieties of Kachina dolls. Line drawings of each variety, plus color and b/w photos make it a complete guide to learn more of the richness of American Indian culture. Paperback, 150 pages, \$4.50.

**POTTERY TREASURES, The Splendor of Southwest Indian Art, Photography** by Jerry Jacka; Text by Spencer Gill. A beautiful, all 4-color publication showing the intriguing designs of the masters of the Indian pottery makers of the American Southwest. You will learn of clays and colors and the traditional methods of hand-forming, finishing and firing. Large format, \$9.95.

**LAND OF POCO TIEMPO** by Charles F. Lummis. A reprint of the famous writer and historian of his adventures among the Indians of New Mexico. Lummis was one of the foremost writers of the West. Paperback, 236 pages, \$3.95.

**AMERICAN INDIAN FOOD AND LORE** by Carolyn Nelhammer. The original Indian plants used for foods, medicinal purposes, shelter, clothing, etc., are described in detail in this fascinating book. Common and scientific names, plus descriptions of each plant and unusual recipes. Large format, profusely illus., 191 pages, \$5.95.

**INDIAN JEWELRY MAKING** by Oscar T. Branson. This book is intended as a step-by-step how-to-do-it method of making jewelry. An intriguing all-color publication that is an asset to the consumer as well as to the producer of Indian jewelry today because it provides the basic knowledge of how jewelry is made so one can judge if it is well made and basically good design. Large format, paperback, \$7.95.

**NAVAJO RUGS, Past, Present and Future** by Gilbert S. Maxwell. Concerns the history, legends and descriptions of Navajo rugs. Full color photographs. Paperback, \$3.75.

## HANDY BOOK ORDER FORM

Name

Address

City  State  Zip

I enclose \$  [check, money order or charge].

MY CHARGE:

VISA



Credit Card No.

Expiration Date  Master charge   
Month/Year  Interbank No.

Signature

(Charge not valid unless signed)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

California residents add 6% sales tax.

Postage/handling  1.00

TOTAL

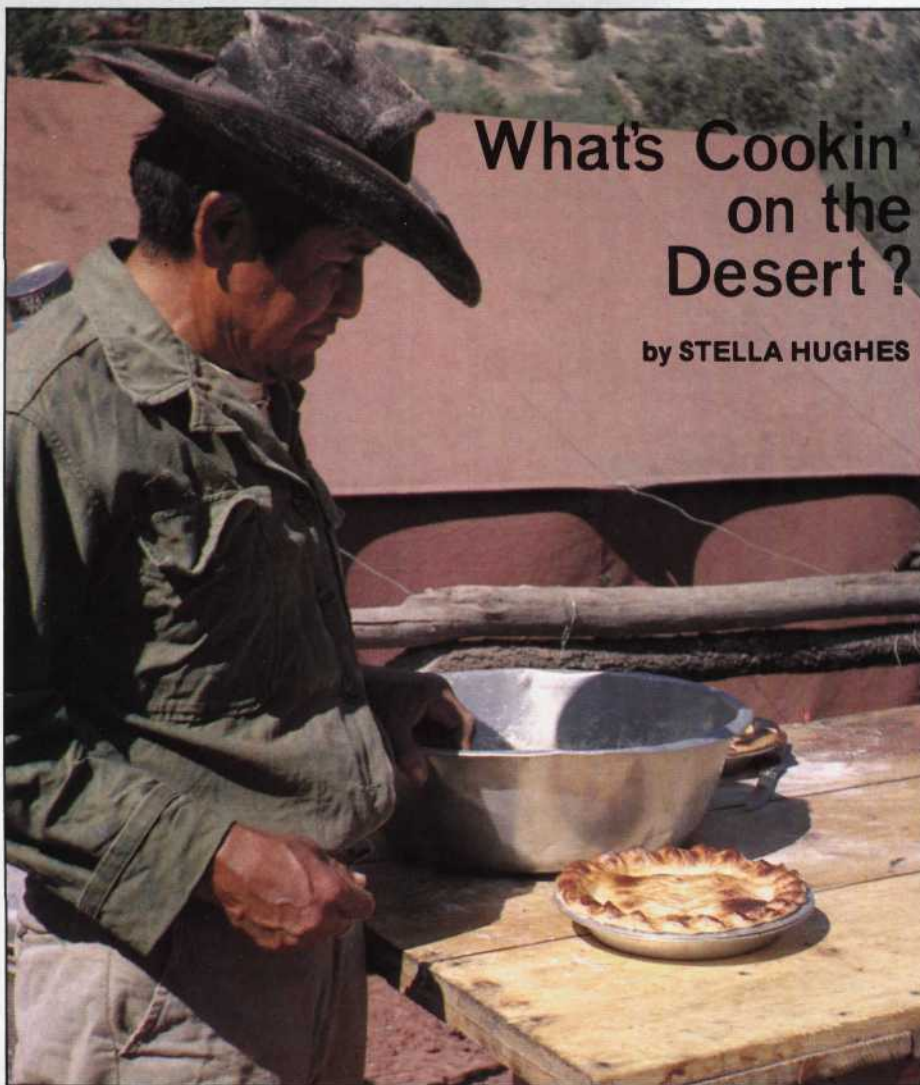
Mail today to:

DESERT MAGAZINE BOOK SHOP

P.O. Box 1318, Palm Desert, California 92261

☐ Check box if you wish this issue replaced.





## What's Cookin' on the Desert?

by STELLA HUGHES

# MINCEMEAT

I lived as a young girl on a dry-land farm in Canadian County, Oklahoma. Farm kitchens in those days were often quite simple with a woodburning stove, a large oilcloth-covered table that served both for dining as well as a work surface for the cook, and a cupboard we called a pie safe. The safe was really a modern invention with a white granite work table that slid partially out when needed and a tin flour bin that tilted forward, with a built-in sifter on the bottom. There were glassed-in doors on the top shelves and a closed storage area beneath the work counter.

Besides the safe, most homes had a pantry for food storage as well as a basement or cellar. Some farmers had a spring house where milk and butter could be kept fresh and cool during the hot summer months, and lemonade made from cold water early in the morning and stored there would provide

a refreshing treat during the heat of the day. Not a few frogs and pencil-slim water snakes were often unwelcome visitors, lured there by the damp coolness.

The safe was by far the most interesting piece of furniture in any farm kitchen. Inside, the top shelves were always loaded with flakey-crustied pies, frosted cinnamon rolls or large, moist raisin cookies. Here also were kept leftovers and the usual items put on the dining table for each meal such as the sugar bowl with tiny tea roses lining the cover and matching salt and pepper shakers. You'd find opened jars of grape jelly and thick peanut butter that had to be stirred vigorously each time it was used. Then there were bottles of catsup and mustard, various kinds of homemade pickles, and a glass holder for toothpicks.

The top shelf of the safe was filled

during the holidays with pumpkin and mincemeat pies. Mincemeat was standard fare all during the cold months, for a large crock was made shortly after the fall harvest of apples and the first beef butchered for winter.

My mother's mincemeat was laced with brandy and homemade grape wine or more often than not, some very potent, high-octane whisky. Our teetotaler neighbors frowned on this practice and made inferior mincemeat with cider or vinegar. Pie socials, held at the country schoolhouse, saw my mother's mincemeat pies bring outrageously high prices, some selling for as much as \$5 to a pie-hungry bachelor.

Most of the old-time mincemeat recipes call for brandy, wine, and whisky. One, called Cattle Drover's Mincemeat, requires one quart of *good* whisky. (*Italics are the original, not mine.*)

### *Old-Time Beef [or Venison] Mincemeat*

This is an economical recipe, calling for ingredients commonly kept on hand even today and used by the pioneers over 100 years ago. Honey and sorghum molasses were staples, and most recipes called for one or the other as a sweetener instead of white sugar, for refined sugar was often scarce and costly. Lemons and oranges were more dear than gold, being often replaced by dried citrus peelings, apricots, prunes, and even dried apples when fresh ones were out of season.

Take 2 pounds of ground beef (or venison) and 1 pound of good beef suet. (If using venison, trim all fat from the meat and replace by weight with extra beef suet.) Place ground meat and suet in a large stew pan, add a small amount of water, and cook until done. Let cool and then put through a food grinder along with 2 pounds of raisins, 10 or 12 tart apples (section and core—do not peel), and 2 lemons, rind and all. Then add 1 pound of brown sugar, 1 cup of molasses, 1 cup of honey, and 2 cups of brandy. If you wish, you can substitute cider for the brandy but you might as well know, the brandy makes mincemeat a whole lot better.

Season with 1 teaspoon of salt and 1 teaspoon each of cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. Cook slowly about 45 minutes. The mincemeat can be canned at once in hot sterilized jars or stored in a crock in a cool place. It's best left to mellow for three to four weeks



before using for pies. When making pies, if the mixture is too thick, moisten with a little brandy. If shill too shick, keep addig braddy.

Many mincemeat recipes call for a large, fresh, beef tongue in place of ground meat. In this case the tongue must be boiled until done, usually about three hours. Let cool, remove skin and gristle, and put through a meat grinder. And here's a modern note, using prepared mincemeat and instant pudding:

#### *Creamy Mincemeat Pie*

1 eight-inch baked pie shell  
1½ cups mincemeat  
1 package instant vanilla pudding  
Spread mincemeat on bottom of pie shell. Prepare instant pudding according to the directions on the package and pour at once over mincemeat. Refrigerate until firm. You can add a topping of crushed nuts or whipped cream.

One of the greatest things that's happened in our part of the Southwest is the new gas refrigerators and freezers that have come on the market in the past year. A Swedish firm is now producing a chest-type home freezer of five cubic feet capacity which operates on bottled gas. For isolated ranchers, mountain-top home owners, fire guards, and National Park rangers, and all those other lucky souls living far from civilization, this is news to write home about.

Those of us who have pampered and cajoled our outmoded gas refrigerators (the last new domestic one came off the assembly line more than 20 years ago) can now thumb our noses at the balky, cantankerous, tempermental old meanies. Many seem to have personalities, like the ancient model we kept at a remote line camp. We turned this refrigerator off during the winter and come warm weather, it absolutely refused to function until two men and a boy hefted the behemoth over on its top. There it was left to sulk for several hours while its vital juices rumbled and gurgled, like a hungry gut, through the freezing coils. Placed once more upright, this refrigerator went to work and produced ice cubes by the ton for the rest of the season. Another oldtimer, serving in the bunkhouse, goes on a sit-down strike for the entire summer, making ice cubes that pour. Hamburger placed lovingly in the coldest part of its bosom spoils in a day or so. Then, lo, the oldster comes

back to life about Thanksgiving time and freezes solid until Memorial Day. Shells have to be chiseled from eggs and lettuce is cut with an ax. Aggravating!

I should have my face slapped for saying one derogatory word about our faithful gas refrigerators that have served us so well and long, many for over 35 years. I even know of one, a Servel operating on kerosene, that is of pre-World War II vintage and still going strong. Few electric refrigerators can boast such long, continuous service.

I, for one, won't miss the putt-putt of the diesel generator the whole night through when our electric refrigerator was brought into service during an emergency. Diesel fuel and gasoline are higher priced in our area than bottled gas, and running a generator less hours will mean a savings in money and fuel.

I'm not boosting sales for the makers of gas refrigerators so please, dear *Desert* reader, don't write for particulars. Your nearest propane dealer will know all about them unless he's still operating by Stone Age standards. I might add that the Swedes are proud of their gas freezers, 'cause they sure aren't giving them away!

A Thousand and One Sights

## *Riverside County's* **National Date Festival**

**FEB. 15 thru 24**

### ARABIAN STREET PARADE

10:30 a.m. from downtown Indio, MONDAY\*  
FEB. 18 (Washington's Birthday Holiday).

### ARABIAN NIGHTS PAGEANT

— Free Nightly —

Famed musical  
spectacle presented  
on outdoor Arabian stage  
6:45 p.m. Nightly  
(Two shows on Sat.)

### BIG ARENA SHOWS

Every Afternoon  
1:30 P.M.

### NATIONAL HORSE SHOW

plus  
CAMEL & OSTRICH  
RACES

### SENIOR CITIZEN DAYS

Feb. 19-20-21

### PAGEANT OF FLAGS

OPEN DAILY 4PM

### SALUTE TO MEXICO DAY

Sunday, Feb. 24

**America's Most  
Unusual Exposition**

# Chuck Wagon Cookin'

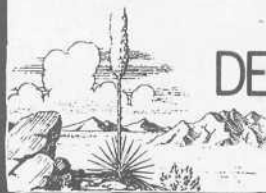
by STELLA HUGHES

A tantalizing collection of cow-camp cook tales and 112 authentic old-time dutch oven recipes. 165 pages.

only **\$4.95**



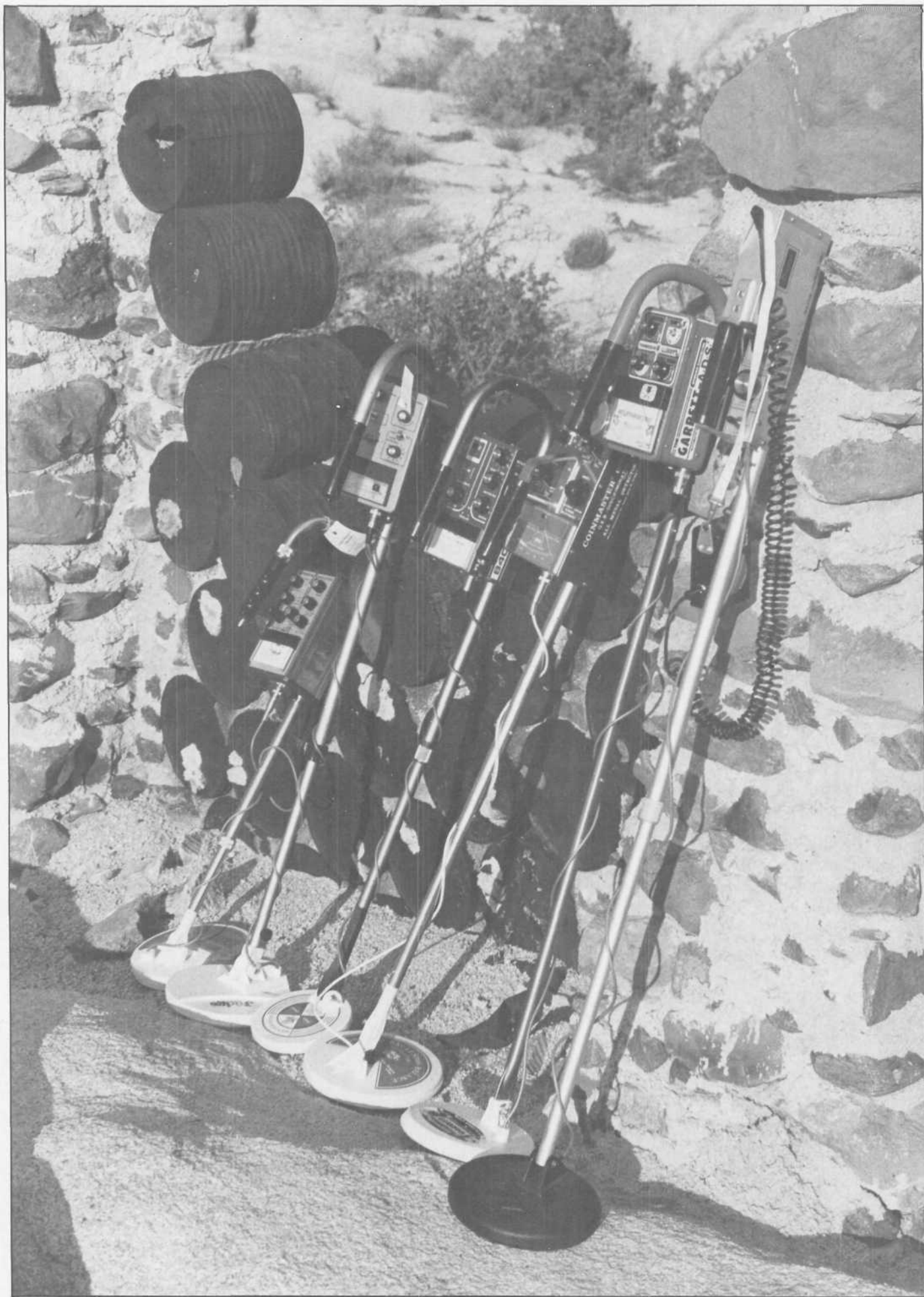
Calif. residents add 6% sales tax plus \$1.00 postage and handling



**DESERT MAGAZINE BOOK SHOP**

P. O. Box 1318 Palm Desert, California 92261







# BUYER'S GUIDE to Metal Detectors Part II

Treasure, like home, is where you find it! Not a profound statement, but true. That one get-rich-quick find can be just about anywhere. But unless you have unlimited time and unlimited access to private property, your chances are slim.

Treasure does not necessarily mean riches. The ancient gold coin or the silver bracelet might be called riches but the old Civil War pistol, the Spanish explorer's knife or even a square nail might be "treasure" to someone else.

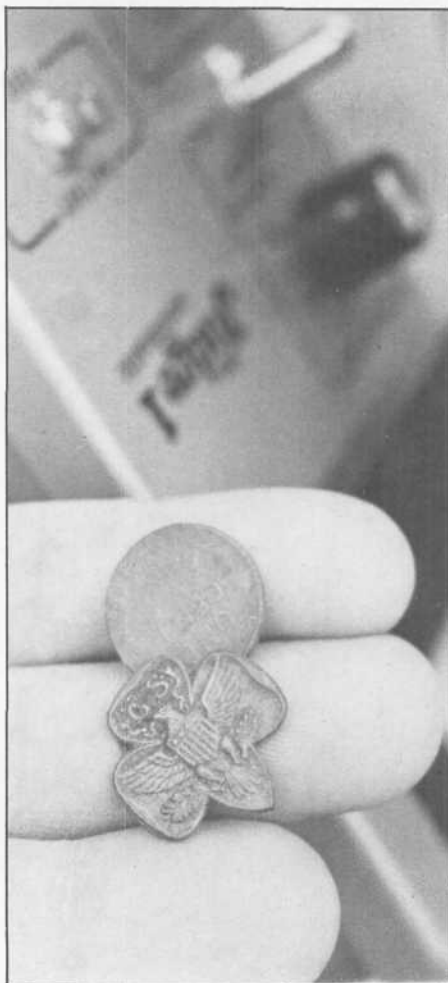
Probably the first question asked by the new metal detector owner is "where can I go to hunt?" The obvious answer is just about anywhere you have permission. A good place to start is in your own front yard.

When I received my first machine I spent time reading the instruction manual in one hand, and using the machine in the other in my front yard. To my surprise, I soon uncovered nearly \$2 in coins in my own front yard. More than that, I had begun to get the feel of the new machine.

First decide what kind of "treasure" interests you the most. The coin hunter is unlimited. He can find them in school grounds and beaches or in empty lots that once hosted the travelling circus or, even, the grass parking strips along local streets.

The relic hunter will probably not work as often as the coin hunter. His time will be spent in research if he is smart. His production will be increased if he does his homework. He must locate old buildings precisely, dig out accurate history,

Compiled by Ernie Cowan  
All Photos by Author



*Rare coins and buttons buried a foot or more deep are immediately differentiated from junk by the modern metal detector.*

and research ownership to gain permission to explore.

No matter what you are looking for with your detector you must observe the rules. Permission to search is important. If the property you are working is not public land, then it belongs to someone. Assuming it is properly posted, you are obligated to seek permission from the owner if you want to search there.

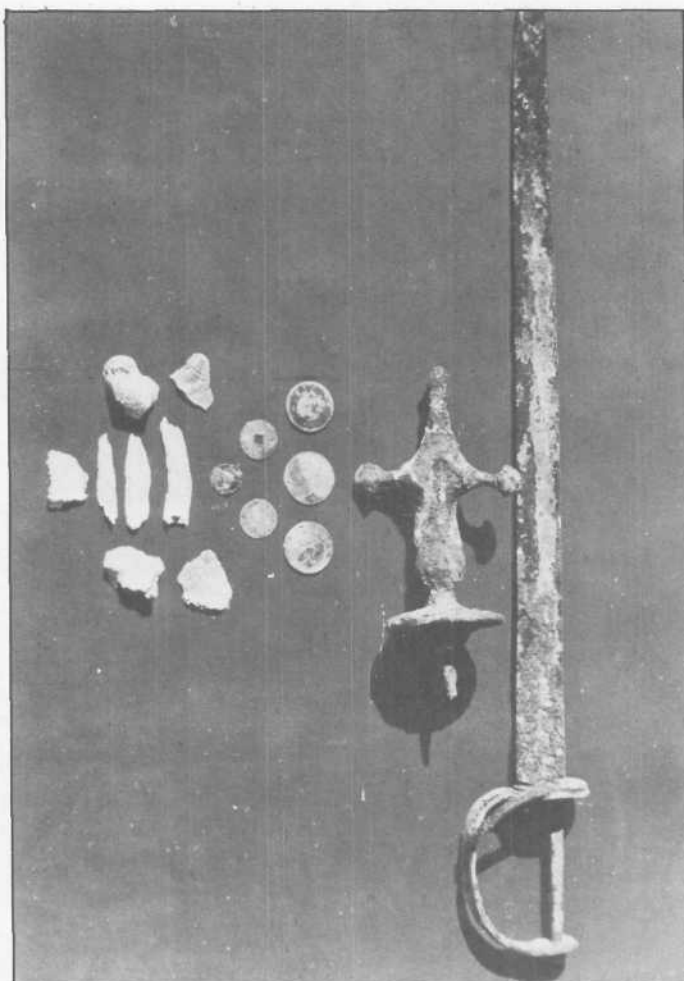
Many TH'ers (treasure hunters) have an agreement form. The agreement, signed by both the TH'er and the property owner, gives the hunter permission to work on the property. Usually, the TH'er agrees to split his finds with the property owner. And the agreement releases the property owner from any liability in case of injury to the TH'er.

In practice, I found people willing to let you explore their property if you make it clear what you are doing. Most people I approached just asked to see anything I found and were glad to let us work their property as long as we promised not to do any damage. Public land is another matter. Most parks have regulations against the digging and removal of historical artifacts. Ask before attempting to dig. Coin hunting is usually allowed but digging is not.

Unfortunately, just like any other hobby, there are a few slob TH'ers who have nearly ruined it for the rest of us. They are the ones who go into a city park to hunt coins with a fold-up army shovel. They may come away with a coin, but they leave behind a foot-wide hole.

For this reason treasure hunting clubs, and aware hunters, are doing all they can to teach the novice how to "clean search" an area. By using an ice pick, you can locate the coin in the grass or the two to three inches below the





Treasure found by professional TH'er George Mroczkowski at San Sebastian Marsh on the Anza Trail. Some may date back to 1774 and Juan Bautista de Anza.

surface that it has sunk. Usually this is all you need to work the coin from the ground. A few taps from the handle of the ice pick will quickly cover the small hole you made. If the coin is a bit deeper, a sharp knife can cut a cone-shaped plug in the sod. After removing the coin, replace the plug.

Nor is the relic hunter immune from this rule of ethics. In one Arizona ghost town we were denied permission to search because those ahead of us had dug holes that cattle would stumble into and break their legs. So, when digging in areas where protection of the sod is not important, at least fill in your hole after recovering your find.

Also, before filling in that hole, don't forget to go over it again with your detector. You may have removed one item only to find there were others. Recently at a local beach I recovered four quarters, two dimes, and a penny from a single hole. But I almost walked away after pulling out the first quarter because I was talking to a friend and not really concentrating.

A helpful tool for coin hunting on the beach or in the desert is a strainer made of wire mesh large enough to let the sand through easily, but small enough to

catch any coins or rings. Many of the coin or treasure shops offer commercially-made versions of these sand scoops for \$10 to \$15.

Many valuable finds have been made under the floorboards of old, abandoned buildings. Charles Garrett in his book "Successful Coin Hunting" tells of a TH'er who found a \$50 gold coin worth several thousand dollars between the window and window sill of an old house. People distrusted banks during the 1930s and buried money and valuables in odd places.

It's best to work with your detector for a time, get to know it, and decide what kind of treasure excites you the most. Then concentrate on that area of treasure hunting and become an expert. Your interest someday might take you on a search as exciting as the adventures of professional treasure hunter George Mroczkowski. Pronounced *mro-kow-ski*, George is the owner of a treasure shop in San Diego's historic Old Town, known as the Gem & Treasure Hunting Association.

George has made headlines many times since 1962 when he retired from a 20-year Marine Corps career and became a professional treasure hunter.

He is perhaps best known in San Diego for his work in recovering artifacts from Old Town. His finds have helped to fill blanks in the history of California's oldest city.

George and his TH'ing friends have worked at the Mission San Luis Rey in Oceanside, California, and he has played an important part in training and assisting local law enforcement agencies in using metal detectors to locate evidence. One of his most important jobs came in February 1978 when San Diego's world-famous Aerospace Museum was destroyed by fire. Lost in the ashes was a priceless collection of aviation artifacts including Lindbergh commemorative medals and a pen taken to the moon by U.S. astronauts. These items and hundreds more were recovered by George and his search team.

His longest search, however, involves the historic Anza Trail, that 1,700-mile route followed by Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza when he brought the first overland settlers into California from Mexico in 1774, and then again in 1776. His 20-year search has been fruitful. He has dug from the sands many artifacts thought to be lost by the band of [Continued on page 57.]



# RAILROAD IN THE SKY

*Story and Photos by Buddy Noonan*

Recently a travel editor wrote: "The Ghost town of Bodie had no 'wrong side of the tracks' because there were no railroad tracks. Bodie didn't have a railroad." Nothing could be further from the truth. Had the writer nosed around a bit more she would have found that not only did Bodie boast a railroad but an extremely colorful one at that.

I was introduced to this slice of California history on a recent visit to the old town on the Nevada border, named after

Waterman S. Body but spelled differently to assure the correct pronunciation. Body the man found the ore deposit there in 1859 but lost his life in a snowstorm less than a year later.

Hiking up old Green Street, I was stopped by a "No Trespassing" sign. Beyond it, just over the hill, I could see what appeared to be a railroad depot and, as it turned out, the property was owned by the pioneer Cain family whose patriarch, Stuart Wells Cain, still lived in nearby Bridgeport. Yes there was a depot and railroad in Bodie, he confirmed. He had been born there on September 20, 1891 and remembered the town well. His father, the famed J.S. Cain, had co-owned lumber barges on Mono Lake. Timber was taken from a forested site called Mono Mills as far back as 1878, hauled to the barges for the trip across the lake, and then packed by mule into

Bodie where it was sold for lumber, mine timbering, and fuel.

Demand proved too heavy for the available mules to supply so a rail line was proposed. Thus, the Bodie Railway and Lumber Company came to be incorporated in February, 1881. Unbelievably, the tracks were laid between Bodie and Mono Mills before that summer was over—32 miles of loops and zigzags dropping down the Bodie Mountains and skirting the eastern edge of Mono Lake.



*The Standard Mine and Mill relied heavily on the narrow gauge B&B for fuel and timbering.*

The day of the new road's maiden run was a wild and big one. The townspeople, charged with excitement and purpose, walked up to Reservoir Hill where the four engines—Bodie, Inyo, Tybo and Mono—waited. There were speeches and more speeches. The boilers were stoked to the ceremonial blare of the Bodie Brass Band. And then, after christening, they stormed away full tilt, bells clanging, leaving a shouting, cheering crowd behind. Every whistle in town sounded.

In 1882 the road changed its name to the Bodie and Benton Railway and Commercial Company but old-timers had already chosen "Railroad in the Sky" and that was the name that stuck. The four brassy little Baldwins made the run from Mono Mills to Bodie and back on daily schedules, never sensing that time was running out for Bodie and for them, too. On September 6, 1917,



the road was abandoned and in 1918, the rails were torn out and all but one of the engines were sold for scrap.

The B&B never really went anywhere and that was the problem. There was no connection, actually, with the outside world which the second "B" for Benton in the road's name implied. There was hope for this as many miles of track pointing toward Benton were actually laid but by then, Bodie was dying. Railroad and town were part of an era and that era was gone.

Stuart Cain had his own memories of the short line. He had seen doctors brought in by rail to Bodie which had a hospital but it wasn't used as such. It was more like what we call today a convalescent home. If you were sick in Bodie, you treated yourself, and when that wasn't adequate, medical help was transported by train.

The B&B had no passenger cars. You rode the line at your own risk, a trip Mr. Cain made on numerous occasions. His brother-in-law, E. W. Billeb, ran the railroad and often organized junkets for the youth of Bodie. Lunches were packed and the youngsters, including Stuart, were carried free the 32 miles to Mono Mills where they could picnic in the pine forest.

Years later, in the 1920s, Stuart was hired to haul the scrapped road away. After recounting all this, he gave me his written permission to visit the depot, without which I would be stopped by the State Park rangers.

You can stand at the depot and rebuild the railroad in your mind. Stretching out as far as you can see is the old railbed, slicing back and forth over the mountains. I couldn't see the end, of course, but I decided to trace as much of it as I could.

You turn left on C-167 from the Bodie road and after going east for about 12 miles, you'll see an historic marker. Here there's a section of track laid on the deserted roadbed, commemorating the "Railroad in the Sky". One of the original ore cars sits on the piece of track and affixed to it is a plaque giving a brief history of the B&B. Looking south, you can see the eroded but still raised right-of-way disappearing into the mirages on the far side of Mono Lake. The lake will be our next and final destination.

You drive about seven miles past the town of Lee Vining on US-395 and turn left on C-120. Another nine miles and you're into beautiful forest and you'll see a Forestry Service sign marked "Mono Mills—site of the early-day mill which supplied lumber to build the mining town of Bodie, 1876-1916."

Walk to the bluff and you'll see the ruins of the mill and also the railbed continuing on up from Mono Lake and into the ravine. There the line ends, terminating in the engine house which is now caved in. You'll see the remains of the





*The lumber that built Bodie came from Mono Mills, 32 miles away on the tracks of the "Railroad in the Sky."*





Above: Lonely ore car monument on C-167 commemorates the million-dollar Bodie & Benton RR.  
Below: This kiln produced lime to mortar bricks in the boomtowns of Bodie, Aurora, and Del Monte.

mill, too, and the platform used to drop the lumber down onto the railcars.

You can almost hear the four little puffer bellies chugging and whistling up and down the line amid the strong fresh scent of pine. And maybe someday soon, you can see the surviving engine playing a role in Hollywood's latest epic for that's where it is today. It's too bad, I thought, that Hollywood couldn't have saved the whole era—Bodie, Mono Mills, and all—and stored it away for future generations to see.



## Metal Detectors . . .

[Continued from page 57.]

240 settlers heading for the New World.

At San Sebastian Marsh, an Anza expedition campsite where the San Felipe and Carrizo Washes meet, George made one of his first exciting finds. It was an olive wood cross with a metal figure of Christ and the skull and crossbones. The skull and crossbones was a symbol once used by the Catholic Church, but discontinued in the early 1800s. The ornate religious symbol he found with the pewter figure and ivory tipped ends could be old enough to have been lost by a member of the Anza party.

Other finds included a Spanish short sword, the rusted hilt of a Moorish short sword, a brass icon holder studded with bright red garnets, and a bronze candle holder. Also found at the same location were a military button from about 1846 and Chinese coins dating from between 1736 and 1797 during the Ching Dynasty.

While these artifacts of historical significance are exciting to George, what he is keeping his eye open for while in the San Felipe Wash area of the Marsh is a legendary treasure. There are accounts of wagons loaded with gold and silver that were buried near the Marsh in 1812. The story, according to the best inter-

pretation, tells of renegade Spanish soldiers who marched south into Mexico to plunder the missions. As they returned north, they left a trail of destruction, until Indians caught up with the party near San Sebastian Marsh.

It is not known if the renegade soldiers buried the wagons full of loot before they were attacked or if the Indians buried them after the attack, fearing they had killed regular Spanish troops. But the wagons were supposedly buried, and remain there today to be found.

Many have tried to find this fabulous treasure. In July 1970 a San Jose man died in the blistering summer heat just a few miles from the Marsh. Was he hunting for the wagons? Found in his belongings was a copy of *Treasure World* Magazine which contained an article entitled "Lost Gold of San Felipe Creek."

George has written a book, "Professional Treasure Hunter," and teaches classes in desert survival at his shop. Though your treasure hunting adventures may never be more involved than a trip to a local beach or park, nevertheless, discovery of an old dime can be just as exciting as uncovering a Spanish sword. And chances are it will happen more often.

Discover for yourself the fun a metal detector can bring to you and your family. It can add a whole new dimension to your outdoor activities. Good hunting!



## PALM DESERT CALIFORNIA

GOLF AND TENNIS

VACATION CAPITAL

*The Smartest Address*

*on the Golden Desert*

## READ ABOUT TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

Articles and news items about prospecting, mines and mining, both large and small operations. Pictures, hints, tips, advertisements for machinery, mines and claims. Published monthly. \$5.00 per year. Send for sample copy.

**Western PROSPECTOR & MINER**

Box 146, Tombstone, AZ 85638

# Bounty Hunter's 840 THE IDEAL COINSHOOTER

LOCATE LOST COINS & JEWELRY WHILE TUNING  
OUT FOIL, BOTTLE CAPS AND PULL TABS!

with LIFETIME WARRANTY



- ★ VLF DEPTH PENETRATION
- ★ DISCRIMINATION
- ★ PUSH-BUTTON TUNING

ONLY  
**\$159.95**  
complete with batteries

For FREE 16 page  
FULL COLOR CATALOG WRITE TO:

**BOUNTY HUNTER® INC.**

1309 W. 21st STREET • TEMPE, AZ 85282 • PHONE 602/968-6400



See your local  
Bounty Hunter Dealer



# THE TRADING POST



## BOOKS/MAGAZINES

DESERT MAGAZINE. OVER 200 ISSUES. Some early issues, \$100. Florence Massey, 3061 Deer Lake Rd., Athelstone, WIS 54104.

DESERT MAGAZINE Vol. I, No.1 (1937) thru Vol. 31, No. 12 (1968) Complete in binders. \$350. Box 576, Palm Desert, CA 92263

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

YOU CAN write, publish, distribute and keep the profits on your how-to-do-it book as I am doing now. Details \$3.00. CBC, P. O. Box 2591, Chula Vista, California 92012.

THINK AND GROW RICH. The report that has helped thousands to extra money. Now you can make the most of your talents. This evaluation will double your income or full money back guarantee. Send \$6 to James March, 803S So. Stewart, Chicago, Ill. 60620. 651-4452.

CHARTED NEEDLEWORK PATTERNS. Large, clear graphs suitable for needlepoint, rug-hooking, counted thread embroidery, etc. Send \$1, refundable with purchase, for color pages to HEIDI POET ORIGINALS (Des), 2504 Kellogg Park Drive, Pomona, Calif. 91768.

PROPERTY FOR SALE. Round Valley and Essex. For information call or write Bob Gaskin, P.O. Box 7326, Riverside, CA. 92513. (714) 685-6295.

## EQUIPMENT

PRECISION LAPIDARY Abrasive Compounds for tumbling, polishing and grinding. Send for free catalogue and price list. MDC Industries, 400 West Glenwood Avenue, Philadelphia, PA. 19140. Dealer Inquiries invited.

## GEMS

SHAMROCK ROCK SHOP, 593 West La Caden Dr., Riverside, California 92501. Parallel to Riverside Freeway. Phone 686-3956. Come in and browse; jewelry mountings, chains, supplies, minerals, slabs, rough material, equipment, black lights, metal detectors, maps, rock and bottle books.

WHOLESALE—GEMS—any type—also other merchandise. Catalogs available. Please allow 48 hours for distribution or mail order. Freda M. Francisco, 11335 E. Lambert, El Monte, Calif. 91732.

## MAPS

OLD STATE, Railroad, County Maps. 70-110 years old. All States. Stamp for catalog. Northern Map, Dept. DM, Dunnellon, Fl. 32630.

## MINING

AUTOMATIC GOLDPANNER. Pan for gold the easy way. From \$395. Goldhound, 4078 Lincoln Blvd., Marina del Rey, Ca 90291. (213) (213) 822-2252.

ASSAYS—Gold & Silver \$10.00. High quality spectrographic analysis for 65 metals \$9.00. Free price list. Reed Engineering, 2166 College Ave., Costa Mesa, Calif. 92627.

## PROSPECTING

DRYWASHERS! GOLD CONCENTRATORS! Guaranteed to recover minerals, gold. A hobby that pays for itself! Write to: Nick's Nugget, P. O. Box 1081, Fontana, California 92335. (714) 822-2846.

## SEED/PLANTS

JOJOBA—25 clean seed, instructions. \$1.50 prepaid. Indian Trail Nursery, Star Rt. 2, Box 75, Twentynine Palms, California 92277.

## TREASURE FINDERS

TREASURE—Locate quarter mile away with ultrasensitive locator—brochure free. Research Products, Box 13441-BUC, Tampa, Florida 33611

INSTANT RICHES—Explore ghost towns. Find buried treasure, coins, relics, antiques, and more. Goldak—the finest "Metal and Treasure Locators since 1933." Send for free catalog. Goldak, Dept. D, 626 Sonora Avenue, Glendale, California 91201.

DOWSING FOR old mines, bottles, relics, minerals, oil, water, lost objects, etc., learned easily, inexpensively. No costly locators, seminars. Details: Onaway—A55, 25 Lucky Drive, San Rafael, Calif. 94904.

AUTOMATIC GOLDPANNER. Pan for gold the easy way. From \$395. Goldhound, 4078 Lincoln Blvd. Marina Del Rey, CA 90291. (213) 822-2252.

## MISCELLANEOUS

PAST 45? 50? Keep your alert mind. Fun for years. Easy. "Mental Fitness" pamphlet. \$2 to ELS, #1 636 Joann, Costa Mesa, CA 92627.

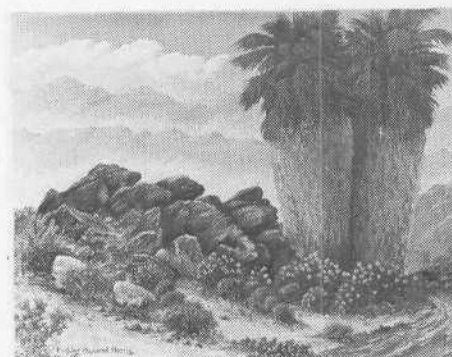
SOURDOUGH FOR THE SOUL. Make yours. Recipes, too. Only \$2. to P.B. Inc., Box G, Cima, CA 92323.

## REAL ESTATE

ROUND VALLEY and ESSEX PROPERTY FOR SALE. For information call or write Bob Gaskin, PO Box 7326, Riverside, CA 92513. (714) 685-6295.

5 ACRES in the Mojave Desert. \$2,500. N. Deaton, 8777 Tuttleton School Rd., Sonora, Ca. 95370. (209) 532-7607. Owner/Agent.

"The original of this painting not for sale. Now in the collection of Dr. & Mrs. R. S. Baddour, Palm Springs, California."

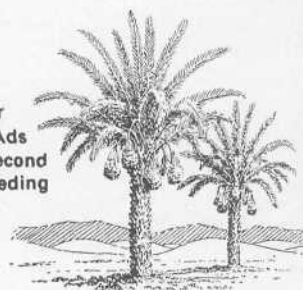


Twin Palms in Andreas Canyon  
**Original Desert Oil Paintings By**  
On Sale at **DESERT MAGAZINES**  
WESTERN ART GALLERY See them at  
74-425 HIGHWAY 111  
PALM DESERT, CALIF.  
*Kingsley Osmund Harris*

## HOW TO PLACE YOUR TRADING POST AD

Mail your copy and first-insertion remittance to: Trading Post, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260. Classified rates are 50c per word, \$5.00 minimum per insertion.

Deadline for Classified Ads is 10th of second month preceding cover date.







# *Over and Under Shotgun*

A new gun that carries on the Ruger tradition—an engineering philosophy which has produced over the years a line of fine sporting firearms, unique in their high quality and handsome design.

This first Ruger Over and Under Shotgun is a perfectly balanced, plain grade gun of elegant simplicity. By the Ruger definition, "plain grade" means precision workmanship and superior finish, with geometrically accurate curved shapes, plane surfaces which are finely polished and mechanical joints that are fitted to minimum hairline clearances.

The unique new mechanism with rebounding hammers and single selective trigger provides positive safety advantages. The gun opens easily and closes solidly. The distinctive styling and unusually low profile are accentuated by the fact that there are no visible pins or screws whatsoever. Barrels are hammer-forged, with 3" chambers and appropriate choke combinations, automatic ejectors and removable barrel side spacers. The barrels and dovetail hollow rib are permanently assembled with strong silver solder joints. The stock and forearm are fully seasoned straight grain American walnut, hand checkered and satin finished.

Every feature of the new gun reflects traditional Ruger attention to detail and the high quality which the American shooter has come to expect of all Ruger firearms. Initial production of the 20 gauge model will be



limited, with increasing numbers of guns becoming available in the months to come. Production of premium-grade 20 gauge models and the introduction of 12 gauge models is anticipated for the future. See your Ruger Dealer or write for complete details and specifications.



**STURM, RUGER & Company, Inc.**

**96 Lacey Place**

**Southport, Connecticut 06490 U.S.A.**

ALL RUGER FIREARMS ARE DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED IN RUGER FACTORIES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





# WHITE'S ELECTRONICS INC.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO WHITE'S ELECTRONICS!

I have been metal detecting for the past 10 years and presently own four detectors. The first three detectors have all found their share of coins and valuables, but the White's 6000/D has changed the old fashion method and put new light on detectors, because my area is about depleted of coins. Heavy junk accumulations make it more like work than fun. Out of state relic and coin shooting on my vacations is the only enjoyment left.

I have tried three new models of Discriminators. Testing these detectors on my coin garden, I found they all had the same fault. The scanning head had to be held at a given height above the ground. This makes swinging the detector very tiresome and should you raise or lower the head even one inch, you would lose a coin even if it was lying on top of the ground. I gave up on Discriminators, as I would rather dig more than to miss a valuable find. A friend of mine who use to sell detectors showed me White's new pamphlet on the 6000/D. I read only 10 lines and I knew this was the detector I had been looking for. The line that convinced me was: "DOES NOT HAVE TO BE HELD AT A CONSTANT HEIGHT ABOVE THE GROUND."

All I can say about the 6000/D is that it is a "SUPER FANTASTIC" piece of equipment. The greatest advancement in circuitry is

something I never thought possible. 95% of all my detecting now is done in the Discriminate Mode. No one, but no one finds anything after I make a thorough search of an area. I have found a large coffee can of coins and valuables in the 8 weekends that I have had this detector. I average 5 to 6 times as many coins a day (in areas already searched by many others than I ever have before.)

As I get more familiar with the 6000/D and learn to analyze what it is trying to tell me, my confidence builds and builds. I have found things the 6000/D will do that your instructions do not even mention. I can not describe all of them in words. Most are just a feeling I get as I get more familiarized to the different sounds and pitch intensity of various finds. For instance, I can tell a dime 9 out of 10 times and between you and I, I have been finding 1 dime to every 5 pennies which is many times better than I used to do as I consider dimes the hardest coin to find.

I am thinking of retiring in another few years, with the possibility of starting a Treasure Hunting Store. Congratulations to White's on the greatest advancement in circuitry.  
George Steiniger  
Wallingford, Connecticut



**ALL WHITE'S INSTRUMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO GIVE YEARS OF  
DEPENDABLE SERVICE**

For free literature and demonstrations, contact a White's Participating Dealer near you.

**CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-547-6911**

No direct orders, please. Factory sells to Distributors only.

**White's Electronics, Inc. 1011 Pleasant Valley Rd. Sweet Home, Oregon 97386**